

UNCANNY, SPOOKY, CREEPY TALES

July

Ghost STORIES



*A phantom battles
for her child*
See page 10

**The Specter that
Asked for a Kiss-**
by ALGERNON BLACKWOOD

Garden of Enchantment:
A Tale of Unseen Love

**The Clue
to the Vanished Bride**

JEAN
CINNA



"They Snickered When I Got Up To Speak"

—But from the First Word, I Held Them Spellbound

THE banquet hall was crowded. Suddenly I heard the chairman's voice say—"We will now have a few words from Mr. Byron Munn." It came like a flash of lightning! He was unexpectedly calling on me for a speech! No time to beg off—no chance to wriggle out of it!

As I started to get up, I heard a titter run around the table.

"Watch him make a fool of himself,"

I overheard someone whisper. "He's so bashful he's afraid of his own voice."

"He'll die on his feet!" came another whisper. "This is going to be funnier than 'Abie's Irish Rose'."

I knew they were laughing at me and expecting me to make myself ridiculous, but I only grinned inside. I stood squarely on my two feet and started in!

"But When I Commenced to Speak!"—

Almost from the first word, the smiles of doubt and derision faded from their faces. They were incredulous—amazed! Instantly the atmosphere became so tense that you could have heard a pin drop! No snickers nor sneers now—nothing but breathless attention from every one of those hundred listeners! My voice, clear as a bell—strong, forceful, unflinching—rang out through the banquet hall as I hammered home each point of my message with telling strokes that held them spellbound! I let myself go—soaring to a smashing finale that almost brought them to their feet!

When I finished, there was an instant of silence! And then it came—a furious, deafening wave of applause rolling up from one hundred pairs of hands—spontaneous, excited, thrilling! Somehow pushed forward and grabbed my hand. Others rushed and everybody started talking all at once.

"Great work, Byron old man! I didn't know you had it in you!"

"You sure swept them off their feet! You're a wonder!"

Was Once a "Human Clam"

After it was all over, Jack Hartry fell into step beside me as I left the hall. "Gee, that was a great speech!" he said enthusiastically. "You certainly raised yourself about 100% in the eyes of every person in that place tonight. . . . And yet they used to call you 'a human clam'—and the quietest man in the office!" It was true, too. All my life I had been handicapped with a shy, timid and retiring nature. I was so self-conscious that it almost hurt. With only a limited education, I never could express my ideas in a coherent, forceful way. As a result I saw dozens of men with less ability pass me by into positions of social and business prominence simply because they were good talkers and knew how to create

the right impression. It was maddening!

A Lucky Accident

At last I began to despair of getting anywhere—when I accidentally ran across a little book entitled *How to Work Wonders with Words*. And I want to say right here that that little book actually helped me change the course of my whole life.

Between its covers I discovered certain facts and secrets I had never dreamed of. Difficulties were swept away as I found a simple way to overcome timidity, stage-fright and self-consciousness—and how to win advancement, popularity and success. I don't mean to say that there was any "magic" or "mystery" about it, because I went at the thing systematically in the privacy of my own home, simply applying 20

minutes each day. And the results were certainly worth it!

Today I hold the sort of position that I had always envied. My salary has been increased! I am not only in constant demand as a speaker in public but I am asked to more social affairs than I have time to attend. To sum it all up, I am meeting worthwhile people, earning more than I ever dared expect and enjoying life to the fullest possible degree! And furthermore, the *secret power of convincing speech* has been the big secret of my success!

The experience of Byron Munn is typical. Not only men who have made millions, but thousands of others have found success after learning the secret of powerful, effective speech. Being able to say the right thing in the right way at the right time has perhaps been responsible for more brilliant success than any other one thing under the sun! And the secret behind it all is so simple that it is astounding!

Send For This Amazing Booklet

Right now, we offer to send you absolutely free, a copy of *How to Work Wonders with Words*. This remarkable little book will show you how to develop the priceless, hidden knack of effective speech that has brought success, social position, power and wealth to many. It will open your eyes to a new realization of what the holds in store for men who master the secrets of Effective Speech. You can obtain your copy free by just sending the coupon.

NORTH AMERICAN INSTITUTE

3601 Michigan Ave.
Dept. 311-B,
CHICAGO, ILL.



NORTH AMERICAN INSTITUTE,
Dept. 311-B, 3601 Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Please send me FREE, without obligation, my copy of your inspiring booklet: *How to Work Wonders with Words* and full information regarding your Course in Effective Speaking.

Name.....
Address.....
City.....State.....



His lips framed the word! Then with deadly exactness, he hurled it into the silent courtroom. Swift—piercing the air like lightning—it seared her very soul. "A woman whose guilt is ignorance. A woman who does not know her own self!"

The divorce court! Two wrecked lives! And no matter what the future may hold for her, it can never totally efface the horror of that verdict. The knowledge of its truth—the torturing memories—the vain regrets—are only a result of her own neglect and ignorance. *For the vital truths of sex cannot be ignored!*

Womanhood and Marriage

BERNARD MACFADDEN has written this book—a book that every wife, wife to be, or mother of a young girl should possess. If only women knew and understood its truths, the innumerable stories of marital unhappiness, separation, divorce, scandal and misery could be erased from the pages of life.

For under every one of these accounts one could truthfully write, "Ignorance again has taken her toll." And the price of ignorance is immeasurable. In many cases, it is life itself!

Ignorance is no longer Excusable

Until recently there was some excuse for women marrying with no knowledge of the responsibilities of wifehood. Because a vulgar publicity had thrown a dense black wall of ignorance around everything having to do with marriage. A sinister barrier that for years prevented girls and young women from learning before marriage those essential things about life and sex that every woman must know—in order to intelligently become the wife of the man she loves and the mother of beautiful children.

Complete Knowledge of Sex

Now modern society accepts no excuses. The alibi *ignorance* carries no weight. For Bernard Macfadden's acclaimed book, "Womanhood and Marriage" unveils the mysteries surrounding sexology for all time. In plain instructive language this book discusses sex—woman's most vital problem. Bernard Macfadden sets forth in clearest detail every particle of information that would be of help to a woman. Nothing is omitted. Unfamiliar medical terms are not used. Bernard Macfadden talks plainly. A spade is called a spade.

Please send me a copy of "Womanhood and Marriage" under plain cover and I will let the postman \$3.00 upon receipt, plus delivery charges.

If I do not feel that the book is worth more than the price charged it is understood that I may return it in perfect condition within five days after I receive it and my money will be refunded immediately without question. Canadian and foreign orders—sent in advance.

Name

Address

City State

We pay postage on cash orders

The Secret of a Happy Marriage

However, keep this fact in mind—*there is nothing wrong with marriage—upon marriage is based the home, and the home is the foundation of our nation.* Marriage as an institution is the greatest, most wonderful success in all the world. But, like all other great institutions devised by man for the good and protection of the human race, it is subject to a well defined set of natural laws—that must be obeyed. Therein lies the whole secret of happy or unhappy marriage. A great percentage of all the people who marry are entirely ignorant, not only of these natural laws but of the fact that such laws exist. And so, since Nature plays no favorites, grants no immunity, is it any wonder that thousands of couples separate every year, our divorce courts are full to overflowing, and that countless thousands of other homes are held together by pride alone?

For Those Seeking Perfect, Lasting Love

What an amazing book. It breathes with the intense spirit of the ages. It reveals the vital sex problems which were in the past hidden behind the veil of hypocrisy. It is a wonderful story of homely truths which will help to bring happiness and love.

How to make love beautiful and lifelong; how to prepare for the greatest moment in woman's life—her wedding day; how to keep the home shining with the wonderful light of happiness; how to protect mental and physical contentment. Never before have you had such an opportunity to avail yourself of information which will guide you to the perfect, lasting love that is every woman's heritage.

Can a woman protect herself from the wolf that lurks around the corner, from pitfalls created by her own passion and ignorance? . . . Yes . . . And, moreover, every woman's dream of a happy home, of a tender husband, or rooms ringing with the gay laughter of children can now be realized. For the truth is mighty. Armed with the facts contained in this great book a woman can guard herself against many of life's greatest dangers. We could write page after page about "Womanhood and Marriage" and not be able to give you an idea as to half of the store of information this treasure of knowledge contains. Rather than try, we are printing the chapter titles for your observation. But even that is not enough. To really know its value you must see it, go through it page by page and learn at first hand just how much it means to you.

Our Liberal Offer

You need not send any money in advance. Just fill in and mail the coupon below now and the book (in plain wrapper) will be sent to you by return mail. When the postman delivers the

book to you, pay him \$3.00 plus a few cents delivery charges under our money back guarantee as explained in the coupon.

Read These Chapter Headings

Womanly Ideals

Ideal Womanhood
The Meaning of Sex
The Mental and Spiritual Significance of Sex
Am I a Complete Woman?
The Old Maid
Choosing a Husband
Judging a Man's Fitness
Marriage and the Drink Question
Personal Habits of the Young Man

Love and Courtship

Why Think About Marriage?
Marriage and Its Alternatives
When to Marry
Should a Girl Marry from a Sense of Duty?
Love Making and Its Dangers
The Girl Who Has Made a Mistake
True Love and Its Expression
Duties and Urges
The Essentials of a Happy Marriage
The Wedding Preparations

Physiological Laws of Marriage

The Physical Relationship of Marriage
The Basis of Marital Happiness
Regulating the Relation of Husband and Wife
Making Love Life-Long
Mistakes and Excesses that Destroy Love
The Pros and Cons of Birth Control
Hereditary and Prenatal Influence
The Requirements of Pregnancy

Domestic Harmony

Why Children Are Necessary to Happiness
The Question of Money
The Scare of the Boarding House
The Question of Friends
The In-Laws
Overruling and Making Up
Jealousy—The Green-Eyed Guardian of Honor
When the Other Woman Appears
The Erring Husband
When Love Seems Dead
The Divorce Problem

Physical and Mental Deficiencies

The Unsatisfactory Husband
The Frigid Wife
Masturbation
Sterility
Sexual Disorders
Special Diseases of Women
Neuroticisms and Their Correction
Tumors

Building Glorious and Perfect Womanhood

Womanly Personality
Determining Sex
The Menopausal or The Change of Life
How to Build Vigorous Womanhood
Improving and Beautifying the Bust
Exercise for Womanly Strength

When answering advertisements please mention this magazine

Ghost STORIES

Vol. 7

JULY, 1929

No. 1

Contents

The Angel of the Marne	CAPTAIN ALBERT SEWELL 6
<i>Did a Ghost Save the Armies of France? Read the Thrilling Confession of a Famous Ace</i>	
A Phantom Battles for Her Child	BARBARA KENWORTHY 10
<i>She Came Back, Like an Avenging Goddess, to Destroy Her Baby's Tormenters!</i>	
The Man with the Sabre Cut	ALAN SCHULTZ 16
<i>A Beautiful Night-Club Dancer Is Caught in a Web of Mystery and Terror</i>	
The Specter that Asked for a Kiss	ALGERNON BLACKWOOD 24
<i>A Daring Girl Visits a Haunted House—and Meets an Amorous Ghost!</i>	
A Reckoning with the Dead	A. M. THOMPSON 28
<i>Three College Boys Explore an Ancient Tomb—with Blood-curdling Results</i>	
Garden of Enchantment	ARCHIE BINNS 31
<i>How a Lonely Sailor Sought—and Found—His Phantom Sweetheart</i>	
The Bewitched Coffee Pot	GORDON HILLMAN 37
<i>The True Story of An Invisible Creature in the Parsonage at Hanover, Mass.</i>	
A Ghost Who Dictates Novels	JOHN L. SPIVAK 38
<i>Can a Girl—Dead for 300 Years—Write Novels NOW? A True Account of the "Patience Worth" Mystery that Has Baffled the World</i>	
Haunted Hollywood	WILBERT WADLEIGH 44
<i>Elinor Dean, Famous Movie Actress, Falls Under the Spell of the Dreadful "Scorpion"!</i>	
The Mysterious Sketch	ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN 52
<i>This Artist Drew an Uncanny Picture—and It Became a Fearful Menace to His Life</i>	
Ghosts of the Living	HOWARD THURSTON, <i>The World-Famous Magician</i> 59
<i>True Stories of the Most Remarkable Phenomena on Record</i>	
One Flash into the Future	ROSS A. BANCROFT 62
<i>He Was Tempted to Steal—but the Spirit World Sent Him a Terrible Warning</i>	
The Spider	GRACE OURSLER 68
<i>Don't Miss the Startling Conclusion of This Great Novel</i>	
The Clue to the Vanished Bride	LOWELL AMES NORRIS 74
<i>A Haunted Honeymoon Leads to a Ghastly Mystery</i>	
Spirit Tales	COUNT CAGLIOSTRO 81
<i>The Queen of Spain's Search for Ghosts—and Other Items of Interest</i>	
The Meeting Place	ROBERT NAPIER 82
<i>Astounding True Experiences with the Unknown—Contributed by Readers of GHOST STORIES</i>	
Were You Born in July?	STELLA KING 85
<i>What Days Are Lucky—and Unlucky—This Month</i>	

Published Monthly by THE CONSTRUCTIVE PUBLISHING CORPORATION, Washington and South Aves., Dunellen, N. J.
Editorial and General Offices, Macfadden Building, 1926 Broadway, N. Y.

M. L. Wilson, Jrs., Advertising Manager, Graybar Building, 420 Lexington Ave., New York, N. Y.

Entered as second class matter April 10th, 1916, at the Post Office at Dunellen, N. J., under the act of March 3rd, 1879. Additional entry at New York, N. Y.
Copyright, 1929, by THE CONSTRUCTIVE PUBLISHING CORPORATION. Copyright also in Canada and Great Britain. All rights reserved.
Price 25c a copy in U. S.—30c in Canada. Subscription price \$2.50 a year in the United States and its possessions; also Cuba, Mexico and Panama. All other countries including Canada \$4.00 per year.

Chicago Office: 168 North Michigan Blvd., C. H. Shattuck, Manager.
London Agents: Atlas Publishing & Distributing Co., Ltd., 13 Bride Lane, London, E.C.

Contributors are especially advised to be sure to retain copies of their contributions; otherwise they are taking an unnecessary risk. Every possible effort will be made in our organization to return unavailable manuscripts, photographs and drawings, but we will not be responsible for any losses of such matter contributed.

PRINTED BY THE ART COLOR PRINTING CO., DUNELLEN, N. J., U.S.A.

Young Man Play Fair With Yourself

Learn the Truth About the Sex Question



AT last the truth is written. The great mysteries of sexology torn aside. And now for the first time you can get the real truth about the sex question. This is an age of plain thinking and frank speech. No longer can a big, vital problem like the sex question be hidden away as a thing to be ashamed of. People are demanding the truth about these things.

And so Bernard Macfadden has lifted the veil. He has told the truth about mankind's most vital problem in a frank, straightforward-the-shoulder style that will appeal to every man who reads his remarkable book.

Manhood and Marriage

is a fearless, ringing challenge to prudery and ignorance. It contains the fruits of Bernard Macfadden's lifelong study of one of the biggest problems confronting the young manhood of the world.

He has had to surmount extraordinary difficulties in the preparation of the book. But the truth is mighty! It can neither be ignored nor suppressed. There was overwhelming need and demand for a fearless, plain-speaking book on sexology. The wall of ignorance that was wrecking millions of lives must be broken down.

The book was written, published and placed on sale. Today in tens of thousands of homes this great work is one of the chief factors in promoting health, strength and happiness.

Life's Handbook

Manhood and Marriage enters the sanctuary of the most secret phases of your inner life. It grips you with suggestions

that are personal and confidential. It furnishes definite and practical information on vital subjects, pure in themselves, which are frequently surrounded with vulgar mystery.

The problems of man frequently assume tremendous importance. They thus become a source of worries that ultimately assume a tragical nature. And the need for the answer to the query "What shall I do?" often grasps the victim with terrifying intensity.

It is well, therefore, that conditions and problems of this sort should be clearly and emphatically presented. For the outcome may mean success or failure, health or disease, or even life or death. Both single and married men needed to know the facts, so Bernard Macfadden spent more than a quarter century compiling the authentic information given you in this book.

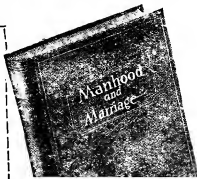
Send No Money

This big book is so powerful, so crammed full of facts hitherto neglected by old-fashioned sex hygiene that we sincerely believe it should be in the hands of every man. Therefore, we do not hesitate to send it to you upon approval. Yet you need send no money now—just fill out the coupon and mail it today. When the postman delivers the book to you, pay him the regular price \$3.00 plus the few cents delivery charges. Take five days to examine it thoroughly. If, at the end of that time, you do not agree that Manhood and Marriage is worth more than its cost, return it to us and your \$3.00 will be refunded.

READ

these Chapter Headings

The Importance of Virility
Am I a Complete Man?
Is Marriage a Necessity?
The Age to Marry
Selecting a Wife
Love Making and its
Dangers
Establishing the Intimate
Relations of Marriage
Marital Mistakes and Excesses
Regulating Marital Intimacies
Should Husband and Wife
Occupy Separate Beds?
Conserving Love—The Basis
of Marital Happiness
A Man's Duty toward a
Pregnant Wife
Should Husbands be Present
at Childbirth?
Are Children Always Desirable?
The Crime of Abortion
Divorce Physiologically
Considered
Can a Wrecked Marriage Be
Reclaimed?
The Erring Wife
Jealousy—The Green-Eyed
Monster
Quarrelling and Making Up
Sewing Wild Oats
How Virility is Destroyed
The Truth About Masturbation
Seminol Losses
The Plain Facts About
Varicocele
The Troublesome Prostate
Gland
Impotence and Allied Sexual
Weaknesses
Sterility
How to Build Virility
Exercises for Building Virility
Foods that Help to Build
Virile Stamina
Diseases of Men—Their
Home Treatment
The Prevention of Venereal
Disease
Various Problems of Young
Men



Macfadden Publications, Inc., Desk G. S.-1
Macfadden Building, 1926 Broadway, New York City
You may send me a copy of Manhood and Marriage plainly wrapped and I will pay the postman \$3.00 plus delivery charges when the book is delivered. It is understood that if I am not entirely satisfied with this book I will return it in perfect condition within five days and my \$3.00 will be refunded without question.

If you care to send cash with order your money will of course be immediately refunded should the book not meet with your full approval. We pay postage on all cash orders.

Name
(Print name and address)

Street

City State

Canadian and foreign orders cash in advance.

When answering advertisements please mention this magazine

YOU CAN HAVE A PERFECT HOME

For the woman interested in making her home the most charming place on earth, the abode of love, happiness and contentment, *YOUR HOME* Magazine is a treasure indeed. Filled from cover to cover with a wealth of helpful information and suggestion, it may well be called the guide to domestic happiness. Delightful furnishings, decorations, flower arrangement, chairs, pottery, window boxes, the artistic use of paint, garden care and plans for charming, medium-cost homes are a few of the myriad delightfully interesting subjects covered in the July issue of *YOUR HOME* Magazine, A Macfadden Magazine, out June 21st, per copy, 25c.

TUNE IN ON HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

RADIO fans have recently found a new thrill on the air in the health and happiness programs of the Physical Culture Hour over the Columbia Chain Stations each Monday evening. Intensely dramatic stories filled with fresh inspiration, romance, happiness and success are combined with exquisite music to supply a new type of radio program, utterly unlike anything else so far put on the ether. They are rapidly growing in popularity with countless thousands of new radio fans each week.

These radio programs naturally reflect the very vital spirit of the *PHYSICAL CULTURE* Magazine and its dynamic founder and publisher, Bernarr Macfadden. The programs are based upon articles and stories found in the current number of the magazine, which is the most personally helpful publication in the world.

In the *July PHYSICAL CULTURE* magazine, *Growing the Super-Child*; *Does Companionate Marriage Work?*; *Is This Happening in Your Home?* (The question of drinking children); *How to Make Swimming Safe*; *Middle Age the Happiest Period*; *How to Gain Weight*; and a host of other fascinating and mentally stimulating articles, together with human experiences and fiction stories different from those found in any other magazine in the world.

Read *PHYSICAL CULTURE* for July, on sale at all news stands July 1st, and tune in on the Physical Culture Hour each Monday evening over your nearest Columbia station. *PHYSICAL CULTURE* also broadcasts a food and diet service in the "Radio Household Institute" each Wednesday morning via the National Broadcasting Company's stations. For exact time of broadcasts consult your newspaper.

HIS FRIENDS THOUGHT HE WAS MAD!

TO all appearances he was blind. He saw no objects in the room. When he moved he stumbled over the furniture. Yet his eyes were filled with a marvelous sight—a rocky island with a multitude of penguins on it, the sea, a ship—all as clearly as if close by instead of thousands of miles away. No wonder his friends thought him mad. He was not quite sure himself. And then, two years later, there came a sequel, a dramatic, amazing, unheard of sequel that left him gasping, bewildered but convinced that he had actually seen half-way around the world.

You will find this fascinating story, *The Man Who Saw Half Way Around the World*, by H. G. Wells, in the July issue of *TRUE SCIENCE STORIES*. It is the strangest fact story this world famous author ever told.

In a dark and dismal dungeon in the insane asylum Felix Malone came face to face with the girl he loved. She was listed on the hospital records as a dangerous maniac but when he looked into her eyes he could not believe it was true. He had to free her! How did he do it? You will find the answer in *Was His Sweetheart a Mad Woman?*

These, and many other stories that will make you marvel at the almost unbelievable things that happen in real life, appear in the July issue of *TRUE SCIENCE STORIES*, on all news stands, June 23rd. Twenty-five cents a copy; in Canada, thirty cents.

THE SKY GHOST

FOR months a night-flying mystery plane has spread a reign of terror over the country. Through the blackness of a moonless sky, where none dared follow, this sky ghost would stab suddenly and unexpectedly here and there, robbing and pillaging; then disappear swiftly to some unknown hiding place. The authorities were baffled and helpless. Finally two daring young aviators determined to risk their lives in the capture of the ghost. You will be thrilled when you read the exciting experiences of these intrepid flyers in *R. A. Bankson's* story, *The Sky Ghost* in the July issue of *FLYING STORIES*.

Other outstanding features in this great issue are *Crazed Wings*, another breath-taking war story by Jo Crozier; *The Thrill of My First Flight*, by Lady S. Mary Heath; *At the Bottom of the World With Commander Byrd*;—and, of particular interest to everybody interested in actual flying, the first lesson in the most complete and comprehensive ground-course in flying that has ever been published.

Do not miss *FLYING STORIES*, a Macfadden Publication. The July issue on sale June 23rd—25 cents—in Canada, 30 cents.

MURDER FARM!

WHO has not heard of it?—that weird place — that blood-stained ground, the Northcott farm to which boys were lured, tortured and slain! Once noticed there, they never were heard of again! For the first time, and with the actual photographs, the whole frightful truth is revealed in

July TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES

Also in this same issue are the following great detective thrillers of fact that stirred the entire country; *The Trail to the Locked Room*; *I'm Guilty—But Prove It!*; *The Body in the Haunted Swamp*; *Was the Famous Bookie Case Solved by Mind-Reading?*; *Who Murdered Old Miser Gibbs?*; *How I Smashed Boston's Notorious Counterfeiting Gang* and others. Don't fail to listen in on the thrilling broadcasts of these great detective fact cases appearing exclusively in *TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES*, over WEAF of New York and 15 other radio stations of the Red Network every Thursday evening at 9:30 Daylight Saving Time. See newspapers for announcements.

—TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES—

The Magazine of Fact
A Macfadden Publication, 25c at all news stands, the 15th of every month, 30c in Canada.

SHE DANCED ON THE DESTINIES OF NATIONS

Mata Hari, beautiful and charming dancer, courtesan extraordinary and paid spy for three governments, was one of the most vivid female personalities in the world. Royalty, diplomats and famous soldiers were her slaves and intimates. Her little toes danced on the destinies of nations. She perched upon the pinnacle of artistic success—and wallowed in the depths of infamy. Her passing was as tragically dramatic as it was spectacularly heroic. The story of her life, an amazing and enlightening human document, begins in the July issue of *THE DANCE*, a Macfadden Publication. Entitled *Mata Hari—The Fabulous Dancer*, it will hold enthralled everyone who reads it.

A dozen other interesting, newsy articles on the dance and its glittering personalities make the July *DANCE* Magazine a profitable buy for professionals and amateurs. On all news stands June 23rd, thirty-five cents.

Enjoy Perfect Vision without these eye crutches

Thousands Are Throwing Their Glasses Away Why Don't You- You Can

GLASSES are only eye crutches. They simply bolster up the eyes—they cannot cure or eliminate the conditions responsible for the trouble. They are useful just as crutches are useful for an injured leg, but they can no more restore your eyes to their former strength than crutches can mend a broken limb. The real help must come from other sources. In the case of the eyes it is exercise.

Over 20 years ago Bernarr Macfadden, father of Physical Culture, had a most trying experience with his eyes. Due to many nights of hard literary work under poor artificial light, they became terribly strained. The idea of wearing glasses was intolerable, so always willing to back up his theories by experimenting upon himself, he immediately started in upon a course of natural treatment that he fully believed would help him.

The results were so entirely satisfactory that he associated himself with one of the few really great eye specialists and together they entered upon a period of research and experiment covering many years.

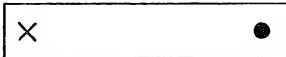
A Startling Revolutionary System of Eye Training

Upon their findings has been based a remarkable new scientific system of eye training which quickly enables you to train these muscles of the eye so that you can make them work properly at all times, and without effort or strain. This new system has been prepared by Bernarr Macfadden, in collaboration with the eminent ophthalmologist who discovered the real truth about eyes.



Although this remarkable system has only recently been introduced to the public, it has been in use for more than twenty years, and it has been conclusively proven of inestimable value.

If you already wear glasses, find out how you can discard your glasses—and see better without them. If you do not wear glasses, but feel that your sight is failing, then find out how a few minutes each day assures you perfect sight without the use of



Make This Test of Your Eyesight

Do you know that there is a spot in your eye where you are totally blind? Prove it now. Hold this diagram about 10 inches directly before you. Close the left eye, and fix the right eye on the cross. Then bring the diagram gradually closer and at about 7 inches the black spot will suddenly disappear. This is but one of the important points of information about your eyes which you should know, particularly if you have any eye trouble.

glasses. If you are a parent send at once for this method, and learn how to save your children from the scourge of near-sightedness, how you can save them from the slavery of eye-glasses, and how you can train their eyes so they will always have perfect, normal vision.

For What Price Would You Sell Your Eyes?

The benefits which you can derive from this new method of eye training may seem too surprising to be true. Yet you cannot doubt its efficacy when you read the letters from the people who have found it of immeasurable value, when you know that it has helped over 2,000 children to regain normal vision in a short time. Your eyesight is your most important possession. It can never be replaced if it is lost. And since no amount of money could make you sacrifice your eyes, you owe it to yourself at least to investigate what this new scientific method can do for you.

Here is a man who writes: "Strengthening the Eyes has enabled me to completely forget the optician. It has practically cured a bad case of astigmatism."

And here is another who says: "By faithfully following the directions given in your Eye Course I have discarded glasses worn for years, and have had absolutely no trouble for the past two years."

Another grateful reader of this helpful book writes: "I had been wearing glasses since I was eight years of age and could not go a day without them. I am now twenty-four and with just a little effort in practicing the Eye Exercises each day for a period of two months, I have been able to stop wearing glasses entirely."

These inspiring results bring a message of hope to everyone who is troubled with weak eyes or poor sight. There is hardly any condition that is beyond the reach of Bernarr Macfadden's revolutionizing method of eye training. Even the hopeless cases, as shown in the letter reproduced here, respond with almost unbelievable results to the treatment outlined by the noted physical culturist.

You Can Try This Course At Our Risk

We want every reader of this publication afflicted with eye-trouble to examine Mr. Macfadden's wonderful course and try the eye exercises that it prescribes. In order to bring this about we are willing to send the entire course on approval, giving you the privilege of returning it within five days after receipt if not satisfactory. The price of the course has been placed within the means of everyone—only \$3.00, plus delivery charges. It is less than you would pay for a single pair of glasses. Can you afford not to take advantage of this offer and all it may mean to you? Not if you value strong eyes. So mail the coupon now, before it slips your mind, and you will never have to wear glasses again.

Macfadden Publications, Inc.,
Dept. G. 3-7 Macfadden Building
1926 Broadway, New York City.

Entirely at your risk, you may send me your course of Eye Exercises. Upon receipt I will pay the postman \$3.00, plus delivery charges. It is understood if after trying the course for five days I decide not to keep it you will immediately refund my money upon return of the course.

(We pay postage on all cash orders)

Name

Street

CityState

Canadian and foreign orders—cash in advance.

The Angel

Captain Roget flew his plane into fire and peril—to save his country. Then, when Death threatened, did a glorious Phantom come to his aid?



I waited for the end, too proud to hide or run

THE quaint old market-place of Rouen basked drowsily in the sunshine of a late afternoon in May. Nearby, a group of people were taking their dinner at one of the little sidewalk cafés, happily undisturbed by the passers-by. Overhead arched the blue, serene sky of Normandy.

Such was the scene of my chance meeting with Captain Philippe Roget, famous war ace. I had not seen him since the Legion held its convention "over there," and then we had chatted for only a few minutes, for we had never been intimate. During the War I had held the minor post of liaison officer at the Headquarters of Captain Roget's brigade.

In view of the fact that I had arrived in France on business hardly twenty-four hours before, the Captain was probably the last person I had expected to see.

Yet there he was, left sleeve hanging empty, the right hand clutching a bouquet of magnificent roses, whose fragrance scented the air all about us. At sight of me he uttered an exclamation of delight, and, laying the flowers upon a near-by

table, gripped my hand in his with utmost cordiality.

"But how does this happen, my dear Captain Sewell?" he inquired. "Let us sit down. I have an hour, and intended dining here. And you?"

I confessed that I had not dined, and we took possession of one of the little tables without more ado.

"But you have not told me what brings you here," said Roget, when we had given our order.

I explained my business briefly, adding that I was to see an important customer of my firm the following morning.

"And you?" I asked. "Those flowers give you away, Captain Roget. I hope the lady is very charming?"

There was a strange glint in Roget's eyes.

"The most charming and wonderful woman in the world," he answered. "One whom I am proud to love and serve."

"That's good," I answered lightly. "I congratulate you with all my heart, my dear Captain." My tone belied my really deep sincerity, for I knew that the woman who had won Captain Philippe Roget's heart was fortunate indeed.

TALL, handsome, in spite of the gray at his temples, he wore his empty sleeve like a badge of courage and seemed, in every way, a hero out of romance. During the War he had performed deeds of incredible daring, including the one that had cost him his arm. In the first days of the conflict, when the French, surprised by the German invasion of Belgium, were falling back in confusion all along the frontiers, Roget had been entrusted with dispatches whose delivery meant the salvation of the French armies; their non-delivery, ruin and defeat.

They were sent to General Joffre by the commander of a French army corps, already cut off on all sides and offering hopeless resistance to overwhelming numbers. They contained vital information as to the disposition of the German forces which seemed likely to entrap half the armies of the Republic.

Alone in his plane, Philippe Roget had been sent by night from the encircled troops, with orders to reach French Headquarters or die in the attempt.

Philippe had reached Headquarters and placed the communication in the hands of Joffre, thereby making it possible for the scattered French armies to unite into the line that later snatched victory out of defeat at the Battle of the Marne.

Later, as a one-armed flyer—for France was in urgent need of so brave a son—he had covered himself with glory, escaping death time after time by a veritable miracle.

So, looking at him, I felt that this lady for whom he was bringing the roses was certainly to be congratulated.

As we ate, we talked for the most part of impersonal affairs, guardedly skirting all references to the War—as ex-soldiers do when they meet. So much is taken for granted; so many experiences have been identical, that there is

of the Marne

By ALBERT SEWELL

As told to

Victor Rousseau

usually surprisingly little to talk about. Besides, Captain Philippe's thoughts were still on the lady—I could tell by the way he kept glancing at the flowers.

"I hope I'm not detaining you," I said at length. "This engagement of yours—"

"No, not at all, Captain Sewell," he answered. "She is in no hurry, and I am not of much consequence to her."

"But surely you must be," I returned. I thought he must be jesting. But there was no levity in Philippe Roget's clear blue eyes.

"It is an old affair," he answered absently. Then he turned toward me. "I have never told you of my experiences when I was sent from the front with those dispatches for General Joffre," he said. "I have rarely ever spoken of them. Do you believe in miracles, Sewell?"

I hesitated. I remembered that Captain Philippe had been what few of the army officers were in those days, a fervently religious man. I did not know what to say.

"Modern science seems to be taking a more tolerant attitude toward the supernatural," I parried.

"But suppose we do not call it the supernatural," suggested Philippe. "Suppose we regard it as coming within the domain of natural law, of science—all these things that are slowly forcing belief upon the skeptics and materialists of the past generation?"

"Spiritualism and table tipping, for instance?" I ventured.

A look of unutterable disgust came over Philippe Roget's clear-cut features.

"Bah, pranks of dead diabolists!" he retorted. "Throwers of pots and pans in haunted kitchens! No, those are not miracles, Sewell. I spoke of something different—the direct intervention, by Divine permission, of the souls of the illustrious dead!"

I was silent. Philippe Roget was sitting up very straight and looking across at the sculptured figure of a woman in the center of the square. The statue seemed to have taken on a sort of radiance in the translucent light of the summer evening.

"I was a skeptic when I started on that mission, Sewell," said Philippe, turning to me again. "But I arrived at my journey's end convinced that I had been used by an all-powerful Being for the salvation of France and the glory of God. I should like your permission to tell you about it." This is what he told me:

Those last days in the Vosges were terrible ones for us. We had gone forward with so much confidence, not knowing that the utmost valor is impotent against machine-guns and high-powered modern artillery. A third of our army had been killed. The bodies strewed the earth everywhere. The Germans were closing in on us, and a reconnaissance by the cavalry showed that the enemy had cut off all our roads of retreat.

In that expedition the flower of our horsemen were mowed



The Germans were only a few feet away!

down by hidden machine-guns. It was not war, it was massacre!

There were only six of us aviators with the army corps, for nobody had guessed the part that airplanes were destined to play. Three of our fliers, venturing too low, had been shot down by German cannon. A fourth had lost his life in combat with a whole squadron of Taubes. There remained only myself and another, and it was we whom the General summoned to him that day.

"YOU are to fly to French Headquarters with dispatches," Captain Roget, he said to me. "Lieutenant Arnault, with his plane, will accompany you. His mission will be to protect you against the attacks of hostile aircraft. He will sacrifice his life to that end, if necessary. But you yourself will avoid all action, if possible; and if he is shot down, you will make no attempt to avenge him."

"*Bien, mon Général,*" I answered. It was all a part of the game of war, and one had to obey.

"We do not know where Joffre's headquarters are, but you will fly to —" He then gave me detailed instructions. "These dispatches will inform him that we are cut off by a force seven times our superior. Furthermore, they will make it clear to him that the main German thrust is coming in this direction, and that the enemy are overwhelmingly strong. If these dispatches do not reach Joffre, he cannot learn the enemy's strategic positions—until it is too late."

"I wish it might be possible for you to wait until night, but every hour's delay makes our position more dangerous." The General handed me the package. "If you are shot down, let your last act be to destroy these papers. I have given you the gist of the information they contain, so that, if you yourself manage to escape, you can transmit it to the commander-in-chief. That is all, gentlemen. You will start immediately."

Lieutenant Arnault and I saluted, and left the office. There was no tarmac, not even a level field for taking off. All that was to come later in the War. We had just three mechanics, and as quickly as possible they got our two Nieuports into flying condition. The Anzani engines were tuned up till they were warm and the tanks filled to the brim with petrol. At last we were off, rising above the field of battle.

WHAT a field! At a height of five thousand feet we first began to see the disposition of the enemy forces. They were all around us. Puffs of white smoke showed where the ring of artillery was closing in. Here were hastily dug trenches, with swaths of dead lying before them. There we could see where the battle was still in progress; long lines of lorries traversed the roads, with the German shells bursting beside them; and columns of soldiers wearing the blue tunics and red trousers of those early days, were moving forward.

Almost immediately we saw four Taubes rising from somewhere along the German lines and making toward us.

The Nieuport was at that time reputed the fastest plane in the air, and we had a good chance of outlying our opponents. Though we were both burning with eagerness to turn and fight, the recollection of our instructions restrained us. I headed my machine westward, and Lieutenant Arnault took up his flying position behind and above me, ready to protect me.

I let the enemy overhaul us slightly, confident in the flying powers of my machine. Meanwhile I let the engine warm up to the limit; then I opened the throttle to the full extent and rushed on. Two minutes later I looked back and saw that we had increased our lead over the Taubes. There was nothing to fear. I laughed exultantly. We were safe now.

But not for long! Two minutes later three black dots appeared out of the clouds a mile ahead of us. They came down in a swift glide, and I saw the hated stripes and crosses of the Germans on their fuselages as the sun glinted on them.

We were cut off; but now we were two to three. Our Nieuports were among the first French planes to be equipped with machine-guns and if we had to fight, we would be able to give a very good account of ourselves.

As the two foremost Taubes shot toward us, Arnault rushed past me overhead and engaged in a brisk machine-gun duel with them. Firing at pointblank range, it was almost impossible for anyone to miss. I shouted aloud as I saw one of the Germans side-slip, and then go weaving down in a steep nose-dive that ended on the ground nearly two miles beneath.

The next instant flames burst from Lieutenant Arnault's motor. I saw him frantically leaning forward in the cockpit; then, to my horror, the flames leaped toward him.

His end was only a matter of moments now, but he sat there, still working the controls, while the Nieuport seemed

to stagger in the air like a wounded bird, and then, nosing down, followed the German to destruction.

The Taube that had shot Arnault down followed, still pouring lead into its doomed victim. I do not blame the German. Those were the instructions that the airmen of both sides received, although many of us French and you Americans refused to fire upon a stricken enemy. I saw poor Arnault fling up his hand in a last gesture of defeat.

Then a wonderful thing happened. The upward rush of air drove the flames away from my comrade, so that they streamed up behind the descending plane like a comet's tail. Suddenly I saw Arnault raise his gun and aim straight into the fuselage of his pursuer, who, thinking him done for, had swooped perilously close. Fearfully burned, and doubtless riddled with lead, Arnault had proved himself a true soldier of France.

The pilot of the second plane slumped in the cockpit. The Taube dropped sidewise, and began nose-diving after the Nieuport. I saw the two doomed ships weave their headlong course downward until they disappeared in the wake of the first one.

Arnault was dead, but he had taken two German planes with him, and he had died for me.

THAT was my thought as, mad for revenge, I swung to meet the third Taube, which was now swooping down upon me. I had been told to avoid a fight if possible, but it was no longer possible, and even had it been, I doubt whether I could have obeyed. There are some situations where the elemental human instinct takes command; and when a man's comrade has been killed almost at his side—well, that is one of them!

A shower of bullets cut holes in my left wing. I banked, and received another burst that shattered my windshield and swept half the instruments from the board.

Immelmann had not then invented his famous maneuver, but I made it, my friend—made it because I could see no other way to escape destruction. As that cursed Boche rode my tail and splintered rudder and elevators, I made a steep zoom upward and a wing-over turn that reversed the situation and brought him within my range.

One blast from my gun, and I had sent him to flaming hell! The road was clear, but by this time the four Taubes that had started in pursuit of us were opening fire. So engrossed had I been with my last encounter that the first I was aware of them was when I felt a sharp sting in my arm and saw the blood running. I glanced back, and realized that I had no chance save in instant flight. I thought of nothing now save my precious dispatches.

The mad rage died in me: I shot forward with wide-open throttle, though not before a second bullet had scored its way through my shoulder. Ahead of me lay a heavy cloud-bank. I made it, shot through it, zoomed, and saw that my pursuers were hopelessly behind me. Beneath lay the heavy wooded and mountainous country of the Vosges. Somewhere on the other side were the French battle-lines, or perhaps more Germans—who knew?

I was losing blood fast; my head was dizzy; I knew that I could not keep on much longer. If I encountered another Taube, I was doomed, for my left arm was helpless, and it was all I could do to manipulate the controls. Fortunately it was well on in the afternoon, and the day was dying out in a drizzle of rain and fog which made the visibility poor.

Somewhere on the other side of those mountains—but I could not go on. I must land, rest and try to bandage my wounds. Otherwise I should never be able to reach French Headquarters.

Underneath me I saw a break in the forest. A little mountain village seemed to be nestling in a clearing; there was the spire of a tall church, rising into the air.

I circled, side-slipped, exerting all my will-power to pre-



vent lapsing into unconsciousness. Somehow I succeeded in making the landing on a bumpy field not far from the church, with a fringe of forest between myself and the village, and with the plane still in serviceable condition.

I groped for my first-aid bandage, but instead, I must have fainted, for I knew nothing for some time thereafter.

It was the caressing touch of a soft hand upon my forehead that brought me back to consciousness. I opened my eyes and stared. A young girl was bending over me, her face transfigured with such infinite compassion that I could only marvel at its wondrous sweetness and serenity. Surprising, too, was the taste of some cordial on my lips.

I looked about me. I was sitting with my back against the fuselage of the plane, which lay at the extreme edge of the woods, hidden from observation by a tall hedge which offered an effective barrier to any one passing along the road near the church. It almost seemed to me that the girl must have wheeled the machine into that position, for I had come down out in the open.

I looked at my companion again. It was dusk and I could just make out that she was dressed in some sort of peasant costume. She was not a peasant type, however, but looked rather like the daughter of some small landed proprietor in the vicinity.

"You are safe here," she whispered, as I opened my lips to speak, "but you must be careful. The Germans are in possession of the village beyond that strip of trees. Fortunately they feel entirely secure and it is not likely that the noise of your motor—if they heard it at all—has caused any alarm."

I groaned. The invaders must have penetrated very far into the heart of France.

AS if she understood what was passing in my mind, the girl smiled.

"France has been invaded many times before," she said, "but she has always conquered in the end. Have no fear! The Boche will meet with a terrible blow that will send him reeling back to the Rhine. But ah, my poor country!"

She pressed her hand to her heart, and her face was the picture of grief as she spoke. All the woes of my poor country seemed mirrored there.

I was feeling much stronger, and looking down, I saw that my wounds had been bandaged. As the cordial the girl had given me began to take effect, life coursed through me again and I thought at once of my dispatches.

"I owe you a thousand thanks, Mademoiselle," I said. "But now I must get on. I am bearing important dispatches for General Joffre. I have lost too much time already. Do you know how far the German lines extend?"

"Far into the heart of France," she answered. "The outposts are at Vitry."

"But that is a hundred miles away!" I cried.

"The Boche has advanced fast. But have courage, my friend. Five miles beyond Vitry you will find the French outposts, and twelve miles back of there, at Villers-sur-Yver, General Joffre sleeps tonight."

"How do you know?" I cried.

She smiled sadly.

"The Boches in our village are indiscreet," she answered. "They think we poor peasants are too simple to understand

them, especially when they speak their own language. This is the headquarters of an army corps, and little goes on here that is unknown to us. Also, we have means of communicating with our friends."

"I thank you a thousand times, Mademoiselle," I answered. "Now I must be getting on."

But I stopped, frozen with horror, for at that moment I heard the tramp of feet, a sharp, guttural command—and then I saw a whole company of German soldiers emerge from the forest and move along the road in marching order.

I made a quick movement toward the plane. My first impulse was to try to start it before that column was upon us, though I knew beforehand the futility of such an attempt.

But the girl restrained me. Laying a gentle hand upon my arm, she seemed to arrest all my powers of movement.

Paralyzed with fear for my beloved country, I could only stand there beside her, watching those men in the hated uniform moving, moving toward us. The road ran close beside the hedge of furze, and it was not so dark but that they were bound to see us, when they turned their eyes in our direction.

Tramp, tramp! At least we might have lain down, groveled on the earth, hoping thus to escape notice. But the girl stood proudly erect, her sensitive nostrils dilating with scorn as she watched the invaders. And, even though the paralysis that had momentarily gripped my muscles had passed away—even though everything was at stake—I could not crouch.

I, a French soldier, could not grovel on the ground to escape the notice of those arrogant invaders, marching, marching on, their feet making heavy contact with the earth, the metal parts of their equipment clanking as they moved. And so I waited for death, too proud to hide or run.

THE Germans were only a few feet away, on the opposite side of the hedge, and still we two stood there. The girl's hands were clenched, and her face now bore a look

of inspired scorn, almost as if she had been some ancient prophetess.

Then from the trees appeared the form of an officer on horseback. He took up his position in advance of the column, on the side nearer to us—so near that scarcely six feet separated us from him. I gripped my pistol, and, as I did so, my companion turned her face and looked at me. She smiled and shook her head ever so little.

The officer was abreast of us—merciful heaven, he was almost near enough to touch the girl!

Then the man turned his face, and I saw his eyes meet my companion's.

He did not see her!

I saw him shiver and glare wildly about him, as his horse reared and snorted. He shouted and brought his whip down heavily upon the animal's shoulders. It broke into a mad gallop, and so man and horse passed us, the man pulling at the reins and swearing, and the horse a-quiver, as if terrified by something more than the lash.

Tramp, tramp! The company was passing us. It was passing out of sight along the road. I looked at my companion. That gentle smile was on (Continued on page 88)

Do You Believe in Miracles?

When France wept in the darkness of defeat, did the anguished cry of the nation summon the spirit of its noblest defender?

If you are skeptical about spiritual things, do not fail to read Captain Roget's beautiful and thrilling story. It will sweep you off your feet with its intensity and power.

A PHANTOM Battles for Her CHILD

By
BARBARA
KENWORTHY



*"Mother!" I called—
one last, desperate
plea. . . . And sud-
denly a radiant figure
stood between me and
my torturer!*

The infinite gulf of death separated this mother from her baby—but in an hour of dire need she came back, like an avenging angel, to face her little daughter's persecutors

MY mother died when I was four. When my father, crying softly, took me into the room where she lay, I thought she looked very pretty, asleep there. I went on tiptoe in order not to wake her.

But presently my gaze wandered to the lovely flowers all about her, and I asked daddy if I might have one. Striving to control himself, he reached over and plucked a rosebud from a bouquet.

"And now—say good-by—to her, dear," he directed, catching me to him, and hugging my brown head close.

"Good-by?" I asked in surprise. "Is muvver going away?"

He nodded. For a moment he could not speak.

"Yes," he said at last, his face working queerly. "Mother is—is going away. You and I are—are going to be alone. Say—say good-by, dear. Oh, God!"

So I said: "Good-by, Muvver." And then, remembering my manners, I added: "I hope you will have a very pleasant time indeed."

THE rosebud is beside me on the table. For thirty years it has been treasured among my keepsakes. It is crushed and faded, but there still lingers about it a faint perfume, as delicate and lovely as the spirit woman who came to me in my hour of need—that beautiful lady who was my mother.

You may question the truth of that statement, for I know

that mysterious hour when shadows are blue and intangible, close to the earth, and the evening sky is mauve. Then my summer house and the garden became an enchanted city, and I waited to hear my name spoken—*Barbara*—in my mother's own sweet, lovely voice.

Often I thought I saw a vague shape standing just outside the summer house. It might have been a bit of evening mist blown from the little pond down the slope; but for me it took on the graceful form of my mother. I saw her as a tall, shining Being, wondrously lovely, clad in a silver mantle with a shining crown upon her head.

At such times I would choke up with ecstatic delight and, lying on the bench there, would sob with sheer joy at the feeling of her presence.

It was thus my father found me, one evening, weak from nervous sobbing, exhausted, half asleep.

"What is it, honey?" he cried in alarm. "What's the trouble, pet? Unhappy?"

"No, daddy, no," I cried. "I'm glad. It—it's Mother. She comes to me. She's queen of all the fairies. She stood just outside the door. She was so lovely I—I cried."

"Mother?" he repeated in surprise. "Your mother's in the library. I saw her there. She wasn't out here, honey."

"No! Not *her*," I said. "It wasn't Amy. Amy makes me afraid. It was Mother—*our* Mother. She came here."

He caught me in his arms and felt of my forehead. He carried me out of the summer house and studied me in the half darkness.

"Are you ill, my little girl?" he asked, worried. "Mother—our Mother—is gone. Don't you see, dear, you have a new mother now? Why do you say Mother came to you?"

"Because she did, daddy," I insisted. "She was all in silver, with wonderful shining hair, and she looked so lovely—"

He made me tell him more about it, and about my world of make-believe. Very gravely, then, he took me indoors, into the library.

"Amy," he began, a note of sternness in his voice, "I'm afraid we're neglecting this baby. She tells me strange things. I've got to insist that you look after her more. Her imagination is becoming too vivid for her own good."

"LOOK after her!" Amy snapped. "Why, Charles, how can I look after her with all these social affairs on my hands? You, yourself, before we were married, promised to let me have lots of parties and things. She has all the clothes she needs, hasn't she? She has her dolls and her playthings. Certainly you can't expect me to be a nurse-maid for her."

My father's face became very serious. Even I, small as I was, saw the lines around his eyes and mouth that never used to be there. Somehow I felt that father was lonely, too, and that this new wife of his cared more for the fine clothes he gave her than for him or me.

"I don't expect you to be a nurse-maid, Amy," he said quietly, after a time. "But can't you arrange to devote more leisure to Barbara? You know I'm tied up so with business that it's almost impossible to see her as much as I'd like to. See if you can't give more of your attention to the child, dear."

Amy did not reply, but drew on her gloves preparatory to going out. She was to be accompanied by a young man who often came to our house, though father did not know that. His name was Jack. I liked him in a way, since he always brought me candy, and for a while he was a prince in my world of make-believe. But he came to see Amy too often in the daytime, when father was not at home. This did not seem right to me, somehow—probably because I could not remember that my own mother had ever had a man caller.

So eventually Jack became the "Black Prince" of my fairy-world.

With the coming of winter I had to give up my play room in the summer house and that brought me in closer touch with Amy. Under the spur of my father's demands, she paid more attention to me, but there was no love between us.

In fairness to her I must admit that at times I tried her sorely. My loneliness made me a thoughtful child. I began to seek reasons for things. If Amy told me to do something I wanted to know why the thing should be done—and why I should do it. This made her more irritable than ever.

Our first real scene occurred over my dolls. In the summer house I did not need to pick them up. But one day in the house, when Amy saw Irene gathering them under her arm while I looked on, she became almost distraught.

"Leave them there, Irene," Amy ordered. "Barbara must pick them up. She must learn neatness and order."

"I don't mind, ma'am," Irene replied.

"But I do," snapped Amy. "Put them on the floor. Barbara shall pick them up."

She turned to me and instantly I bristled.

"Why do I have to?" I asked. "They're my dolls, and this is my room. If my father says I can leave them there, I don't have to pick them up for you."

AMY motioned Irene to leave the room. The woman hesitated. Irene loved me and had loved my mother. She wanted to avert the impending clash. But Amy proved adamant.

"Leave the room at once!" she ordered, stamping her foot. "Dare disobey, and you leave for good. I'm mistress of this house!"

Irene turned white, but she left the room, closing the door. Instantly Amy made for me.

"You pick up your dolls, you little brat," she snarled, her hands clenching and unclenching. "I'll teach you!"

I had never been whipped. I had yet to learn the fear that comes from corporal punishment. I stood my ground.

"This is my room," I announced, as regally as I thought a princess would say it.

Amy did not wait. Before I could move she was on me, and as I struggled to get away, she suddenly drew her sharp nails down my arm, tearing the skin, bringing the surging blood to the surface in four long furrows.

The sight made me sick, but I did not cry out. I fought her, as if for my life. And she, beside herself with rage,

struck me, scratched my face and arms until, breathless, her anger spent, she threw me to the floor where I lay moaning and bruised, too weak, too ill to move.

Frightened at last, Amy called Irene. Together they put me to bed and Irene spread ointment on my arms and bandaged them herself, her eyes flashing with fury at her mistress. But Amy threatened to have her driven out of town if she ever so much as told my father.

Yet, despite this, I think it was my entreaty of Irene to stay with me that

kept her silent. Whether or not this was wise in the end, I was grateful to her for it, for father was away much of the time that winter and often Irene's beguiling diplomacy saved me from many similar beatings.

Henceforth I hated Amy, openly and defiantly, just as she hated me. She had my little fox-terrier killed, because she was afraid of dogs. Often she frightened me almost into hysteria by threatening to lock me in the cellar with the rats. Then when I cried out in terror, she took a fiendish delight in describing how those horrible gray creatures with their sharp teeth would gnaw my throat. She locked me in closets until I nearly suffocated.

I lived now in mortal terror, in a world of fear, more vivid because of my abnormally intense imagination. I grew



morose and sullen. In desperation I fought back, by word and deed, whenever I came in contact with Amy. I grew to be a little savage.

Oh, if someone had only understood! If someone could have given me love and sympathy, instead of treating me like a grown-up—and then beating me for my mistakes. Why, I was only a baby!

Amy complained to my father that I was a terrible child whose awful nature was driving her insane. And when my father took me in his lap to talk with me about it, I could not tell him my side, for I was too young to express myself. Consequently, little by little, he came to believe what Amy said was true. He looked on me with suspicion. I was losing his love, and more than ever I felt alone, lost, toppling over into the blackness of despair.

Only one thing kept me from going insane, I believe. That was the ever recurring presence of my own mother. How I looked forward to that quiet hour between daylight and dark when she seemed to be near me! In the winter months I went to my room at that time and waited there in the darkness, never daring to turn on the light for fear I might miss her.

And then, out of the darkness, it seemed as though she came to me. I did not see her, or hear her. But suddenly there would come over me the feeling that she was near, that she comforted me, that she took me in her arms. Peace stole over me, and all my hurts seemed healed in her abiding love.

SOMEHOW the winter passed and summer came again. I was six years old by this time and Amy had been mistress of our house for nearly a year and a half. I saw little of my father now. Afterwards I learned he had become an official of the company, and his responsibilities occupied almost his every waking hour. I think, too, he gradually realized that his marriage with Amy had been a mistake and he was glad enough to be at his business rather than with her.

With summer, my own life eased a little. Once more I was left to myself in the garden and the summer house. But somehow the winter months with the constant whippings, the fiendish desire of Amy to conquer me at all odds, had left their mark, and I did not find the pleasure in my imagined fairy-folk that I had the year before.

I grew more desolate and lonely. I had headaches and felt ill. Where I had encouraged the idea of faces—friendly faces—peering at me from the flowers and shrubs, I now became terrified of every sound and sight. Vague rustlings in the leaves, noises that I had attributed to the movements of the fairy-folk, now became the crouchings of those rats that were coming from the cellar to bite me.

Only the feeling that Mother was near prevented me from going mad. Was she really there? Could it have been possible that out of the Beyond she came to me—to soothe this tiny tortured soul, to heal the hurts that other cruel woman impressed on me, to bring me love and keep her baby's tottering mind from sheer madness?

The climax came one lovely June night. A half-moon hung low in the sky, casting a faint silver light over our garden. It was such a night as Mother might choose to come to me again and stay a little longer than usual. Father was away on a long business trip and would not return for several days.

Hopefully, I wandered to the summer house. And there I saw two figures—Amy and Jack, her lover—in a passionate embrace, their arms entwined, their lips touching. They had not heard me approach and might never have known I was there. But while I watched in childish amazement, Amy's dress slipped from one shoulder, and even as I stared, Jack's lips found the soft curve of her throat in a burning voluptuous kiss.

Infant that I was, a sudden feeling of revulsion stole over me. I did not know why, but instinctively it seemed to me

that what I had seen was wrong. This was my father's wife, and somehow, though I could not reason why, it seemed unfair to him that this other man should kiss Amy. I stopped on the threshold.

"I'm going to tell Papa," I said decisively.

They leaped apart as though struck with a whip.

"My God!" Amy cried. "Jack! The brat has seen us. She will tell her father. I know her! What will I do?"

Her voice rose almost to a scream. Jack tried to soothe her.

"Let her tell," he said. "It might as well be now, Amy. You've got to go with me. I'm sick and tired of sneaking behind another man's back. Pack up your things and come away with me before he returns."

"With you?" she cried. "With you, Jack? Who's going to support me? Do you think I want to go back to work and leave all this? Can you buy me these fine clothes? Can you give me such a home? Go with you! No! I'll murder that brat before I'll let her drive me away."

Amy was becoming hysterical now. Again and again Jack tried to soothe her, to hush her voice. Frightened, I ran away and hid in the shrubbery behind the summer house. Still their voices came to me—his pleading, her peremptory, demanding.

And what she demanded was that he help her do away with me, banish me somehow, for once and all, out of her life!

Jack would not listen to her wicked schemes at first. Either he was afraid, or was more of a man than I often give him credit for being—I do not know. He got her quiet after a while, but they went on discussing ways and means to get me out of the way.

Amy would not take any negative answer. She pointed out to Jack that with my father away she could have her lover,

as well as her fine dresses and easy life, if only I were out of it. She served him an ultimatum—that he was to get rid of me for once and all, or she would have no more to do with him. At last Jack agreed, saying he saw a way.

No words can describe the deathly chill that came over me as I heard that man exclaim:

"I've got it, Amy! There's a band of those horse-trading gypsies camped down on the Lake road. We can take the youngster to them. For a hundred dollars they'll take her away and no one will ever know."

Gypsies! Stealers of little children! How often Irene had kept me indoors when they came to town! I had been with my father to one of their camps when we were out for a walk. There was nothing romantic about them to me. Fearful beings, their wagons horribly dirty, their many dogs, so different from my little fox-terrier. Gypsy men, hideous, with bangles in their ears, dark-skinned, evil, leering! Even as I had looked at them my imagination made them ogres.

"**W**E can take her?" echoed Amy. "You'll take her, you mean. And you'd better go do it now, at once!"

"Not yet," he pleaded. "It's too early. Someone might see. What time does she go to bed?"

"It's her bedtime now," came the reply in the darkness.

"Wait until she's asleep. I'll steal up and get her and take her away. Give me another kiss."

Frozen with fear, my body shaking, I lay there too stunned to move. The warm June night might have been winter. I was to be given to the gypsies? Never to see my daddy any more? I was to ride away in those dirty wagons, to be taught to steal—or else be beaten by those cruel, dark-skinned men? Irene had told me about gypsy children.

Small as I was, these thoughts came to me as I lay in the shrubbery. I must run away. But where? I had never been far from our home. Yet I could not stay there in the garden. To return to my room meant that Jack would find me. Still, I had no other place to go. To Irene? She was out for the evening. Already faces were beginning to leer at me out of the shrubbery—grinning, wicked, leering faces,

swarthy and evil, with gold bangles in their ears. They seemed to be drawing in on me. They gathered closer! They were about to clutch me!

Leaping up suddenly, not caring whether those two in the summer house heard me, I ran—ran to the only sanctuary I knew—my room.

Only habit made me throw off my clothes. Mechanically I hung them up, donned my nightie, and jumped into bed, clutching the old rag doll I always slept with. I pulled the covers over me.

But those leering faces had followed me into the room. They lifted the covers and peered at me. Long yellow fangs that pushed their lips apart gleamed menacingly.

"Go away!" I cried. "Don't take me. Don't carry me off. Go away! Go away!"

They only drew closer.

That vivid imagination with which I was endowed, fostered so long by my loneliness in the garden, and played upon by my step-mother, raised havoc now with my unstrung nerves. Frantically I beat at my tormentors. They laughed—I could hear their maniacal laughter—drawing just out of reach and clutching at me again.

I was alone, fighting them off with my tiny fists, a baby striving with all my puny strength to beat back those demons, those hideous creatures of fantasy, into the darkness whence they came.

I CRIED out in my agony of spirit. I cried for my daddy—but he was away and could not come. I cried for Patrick, my dog. But he was dead. No one was left for me to call upon, except—

In my extremity I cried out to the only one my baby mind could recall—to her to whom I would naturally turn.

"Mother! Mother! Mother!" I screamed over and over again.

"Mother!" I repeated, frantic, breathless with terror.

Suddenly the Terrors in the shadows seemed to cease their leering. It was as if I had uttered some magical incantation, banishing them. Strangely they drew back, fainter and fainter, and were gone.

Exhausted, spent, I lay in my bed moaning—oh, so terribly weak and helpless. They were gone. But now to my ears there came a new sound bringing new terror. Footsteps outside in the hall, the door of my room opening, and voices.

"Where is she?" Jack's voice, whispering.

"Over there in the crib. Quick. Don't turn on the light. Pick her up."

I fought again, feebly, moaning, struggling still. But Jack lifted me, wrapping a blanket about me, crushing me against himself. He turned to the door.

"Mother!" I called—one last, desperate plea. . . .

Then, just when I thought myself lost, just when I would have welcomed death rather than go to those gypsies—a glimmering radiance gathered in one corner of the room, growing dimly brighter. Jack gave a startled gasp and his grip relaxed. I slipped to the floor, landing on my feet and stumbling back toward my bed. The next instant Amy reached for me, cold fury in her face. And then, amazingly, the radiance in the corner of the room took on form and substance—and suddenly a radiant figure stood between me and my torturer, like an avenging angel!

It was the phantom of my mother, all lovely and shining, just as I had envisioned her in my lonely dreams: tall and commanding, with what appeared to be a silver mantle hanging from her shoulders. Her features were set imperiously and one arm was raised in a commanding gesture.

Afterwards I might have believed it another hallucination of my fever-haunted brain if it had not been for Amy's scream.

"Oh, God!" she cried, staggering back. "Jack! It's—her mother!"

The man stood there half paralyzed with fright. He did

not know what to do. But in a moment Amy shrieked wildly again as the strange figure advanced toward her. Jack almost threw me back on my bed. They were like two trapped dogs, cringing against the far wall as Mother advanced upon them. Amy half sank to the floor, clinging to her lover.

Then there came the sound of other footsteps, running this time. The door swung wide. My father—he whom I had thought was far away—suddenly stood there! He reached for the switch and the room became dimly illuminated by the night lamp. He did not see the vague figure there, but he saw the other two.

"What's the meaning of this?" he demanded hoarsely. "Why did Babs cry, and what are you doing here?" He turned fiercely on Jack.

Jack, horribly afraid now, craven, tried to dodge past him, but my father stepped in his way.

"I'll tell you about it, sir, and God forgive me for not telling you before."

It was Irene's voice from the hallway that interrupted him, and, face to face, before those two, she poured out the story, accusing those torturers of a little child as they stood speechless, cringing. My father's face grew very white and stern. I think he was on the point of killing. But he controlled himself.

"Get out—both of you!" he snapped harshly, when the story was done. He did not wait to see them go, but ran to me, falling on his knees beside my crib.

"My baby," he cried. "My little daughter! Honey . . . Pet . . . Irene!" he called to our servant. "Get a doctor quick, for God's sake!"

He did not wait for her but went himself. Out of a vague blackness that was settling over me I heard him calling frantically. In a moment he was back at my crib. His fingers felt my forehead, caught my hands. I felt hot and cold by turns. I felt myself sinking into deeper blackness. I dimly heard a moan and a higher-pitched cry escape my father's lips:

"She's dying! Alice! Alice! Our baby!"

He spoke my mother's name. In our extremity we both had called on the one we loved—the one who had gone away from us.

Do the dead hear? Do spirits come back to the ones they love, to help them in dire need?

I tell you they do, for out of the shadows came stealing that radiant, intangible form I had seen in the garden and just before, in the room. She came and stood by my crib. Cool fingers, light, without weight—as light as dew falling on the delicate pattern of the cobwebs—stole over my forehead. Peace settled over me—as though that phantom mother had taken me in her arms and rocked me to sleep. I heard her father speak.

"ALICE!" he breathed in awe. "Alice! You—you've come—to save her? You called me. Through the night and the day—out there—I heard you calling me to come to her, and I did. And—and now you've come, too—out of the grave?"

He could not believe it at first. Nor could I understand what was happening to me. I felt light, ethereal, as intangible as the form that stood opposite my father on the other side of my crib. Then, as if Mother gave me new strength out of her spirit, that chill left me and new warmth came stealing through my frame.

After a while I heard another voice—the doctor's.

"Brain fever . . . Lack of proper nourishment . . . Recent terrible fear of some sort. Dammit, man, is that your daughter, or a dog? Before God, you deserve to lose her."

I heard my father's unhappy cry, his pleading query.

"No, I don't think so—not tonight," the doctor's voice spoke again gruffly. "Not through any help of yours, though. Remarkable case. By all the symptoms she should have died before I got here, a half hour ago. By some strange miracle

she's pulling through. I'll telephone for a nurse at once."

You may say this was a fiction of my brain. But it was real to my father. As soon as the doctor went out, the lovely radiant form of Mother, that had waited in the dim shadows of the room, came forward again. Father, on his knees beside my crib, stared up at her.

"Alice," he said falteringly, "I don't deserve her. I've neglected her ever since you went away. But you—you've given her back to me, as you gave her to me from the travail of your soul once before. God helping me, dearest, I—I'll be to her what you'd like me to be—father, mother, playmate, everything. I swear it, Alice! Help me to do it, dear."

The lovely shining person seemed to smile at us both and for a moment hovered nearer. Then, as the doctor's voice sounded from the hallway again, she seemed to slowly disappear, as mist is dissolved by the sun. Only her smile upon us seemed to linger to the last.

I NEVER have seen Mother since then. It is incidental to this record that Amy ran away with her lover, shortly after they two left the room. Irene saw them go and told us about it afterward. Father did not care to find out where Amy went and we never knew what became of her or Jack.

The Phantom of the Bonnet Woman

By Mrs. ELIZABETH LONGENECKER

Reading, Pennsylvania

DO I believe in ghosts? I certainly do. Read this, and perhaps you, too, will agree with me that there is something worth considering in those manifestations which we call spiritualistic phenomena. I won't vouch for it that we can communicate with the departed, nor will I say that we can bridge the gulf that separates this world from the hereafter, but this much I do say and firmly believe, that what I beheld on an early autumn morn some fifteen years ago was no optical illusion, nor was it a dream, for I was as wide awake as I am at present.

On this particular morning of which I am writing, Phil, my husband, and I arose precisely at ten minutes to three. Rather an unusual time, you will say, to commence the day. But you see we lived in the country on a large farm at that time, and attended the city markets some ten miles distant, so we were compelled to get an early start.

We had just come downstairs, and Phil had started for the barn to feed the horses, while I busied myself getting lunch before we started. I had occasion to go out on the side porch for the cream and butter, and in so doing I saw a woman coming up the road toward our house.

I could see her plainly, as it was bright moonlight. She appeared to be rather tall, with light, flowing garments, and on her head was a large bonnet. Our nearest neighbor, Sara Smith, generally wore one, and she was also a tall woman. Naturally I surmised this to be Sara, as her aunt had been ill the day before and might need a doctor.

With this thought in mind, I started for the fence, at the same time exclaiming: "Why, Sara, what are you doing here at this time of the night?"

No answer.

"Can I do anything for you?" I continued. "If so, tell me." Still no answer.

By this time I had arrived at the fence and—was this Sara? My heart almost stopped beating. It's a miracle I didn't drop dead right there. I was rooted to the spot. I couldn't move. I couldn't cry out. There I stood helpless, my senses numb, while the apparition—for apparition it was—stood staring at me with—oh! those eyes! Will I ever forget them? Not if I live to be a hundred. They were as large as silver dollars.

In place of a nose and mouth, the creature had a long,

But often in the quiet of an evening, long afterward, Dad and I would talk over that strange appearance of Mother.

"I saw her, as truly as you say you saw her," he always assured me. "She came—she was in that room. She loved us both, Babs. We both called her; and she came to help us, because she loved us."

"But how did you happen to come that night unexpectedly, as you did?"

He would sit silent when I asked him that. Then he would look gravely at me and answer:

"She called me. She called me from that western city. I heard my name—not spoken, but within me somewhere. On the train, through the night, all through the next day I heard her calling me, telling me to go to you. I could not resist. I had to come . . . Babs?"

"Yes, Dad."

"Do you ever see her now?"

"No," I would tell him, "not any more. Only, at times I feel as if her presence were near me when I am depressed or in trouble."

"So do I," he would respond. "Some day I shall take her hand and go away with her."

He did, not long ago.

sharp beak, like some large bird of prey. Its hands were like long, pointed talons as they rested on top of the fence.

I don't know how long it stood thus. In that brightly moonlit early autumn morn, it seemed an eternity to me.

All of a sudden it vanished, just as completely as though the earth had opened up and swallowed it. I seemed to regain my senses, and gave vent to one long, loud scream—loud enough to wake the dead—and then I knew no more.

When I awoke to consciousness I was lying on the couch in the sitting room, with Phil on one side and the doctor on the other. I heard the doctor say: "She's coming to. She'll be all right now. Don't excite her, as she has had a bad fright, whatever it was."

HE had a glass full of something which he held to my lips and bade me drink. It thoroughly revived me. Like a flash I remembered. I had seen a ghost, and as I thought about it, I almost fainted again.

I told them what I had seen. I don't know if they believed me or not. I don't think the doctor did, as I heard him utter under his breath, something about "optical illusion and nervousness." He left me some medicine, cautioning me to be careful not to excite myself and with that he left.

Phil and I went on discussing the incident, as it was too late now to attend market. It was broad daylight. Could it be possible that I had been unconscious almost four hours? Yet it was so. It was all but seven o'clock.

Presently someone knocked at the door, and on opening it, old Granny Ruggles, one of our neighbors, came in.

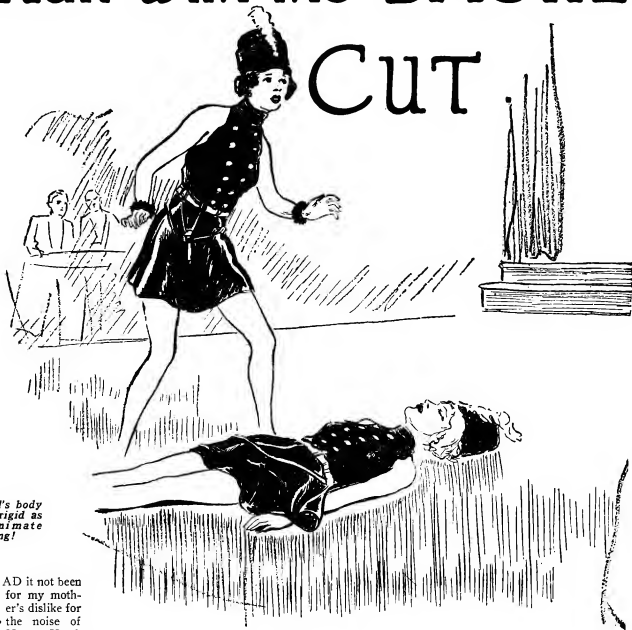
I told her of what I had seen, and she said she had seen it, too, but never at such close range. She always saw it from a distance, she said, sometimes far down the road. It always stopped and disappeared at the old lime kiln, about a quarter of a mile up the road.

The older generation around there claimed there had been an atrocious murder committed years and years ago and this specter was believed to be the victim's shade.

A number of other people had seen the apparition besides Granny Ruggles and me, and the natives, in their curious Pennsylvania Dutch dialect referred to it as the "Hoot Frau," meaning in English the "Bonnet Woman," on account of the large bonnet it always had on.

In the Crystal Slipper, famous New York night-club, a beautiful dancer lay unconscious, under the terrible spell of

The Man with the SABRE Cut.



The girl's body was as rigid as an inanimate thing!

HAD it not been for my mother's dislike for the noise of New York City life, I would never have become enmeshed in the villainies of Raoul Murtha. The strange events which tied up my life with his are even now not quite clear. But my best plan is to tell my story as it happened. If I stop to think of the horror of it, I get tangled up.

Sometime in the early spring of 1926, we moved out to Corona, a few minutes' walk from the end of the subway line. There was nothing remarkable about the house. In fact, it was littered with faults. The drains were bad and the floors had a way of creaking at the lightest footstep. But the neighborhood was quiet and it suited my mother.

Nothing remarkable about the house? I must give more details. To look at it, the house was quite ordinary, but to me it had an unexplainable quality. From the first, I felt as if I were being watched. As if unseen eyes were

looking at me from the plaster and oak paneling of the old place.

Nevertheless, I paid little attention to my imaginings. I laid my uneasiness to an upset stomach and a slight depression caused by the fact that I had been out of work for three months.

Perhaps, if I had never discovered the comforts of our attic and a remarkable old work bench that stood there, nothing further would have happened. For I am a plain fellow, not at all inclined toward searching after mystic phenomena.

The attic had a good window and a comfortable air about it. The work bench was a beauty. It dated back to the time when hand-forged iron nails were still used, and it had bronze fittings at the keyholes of two long drawers.

Love, Violence and the Supernatural play
amazing parts in this unusual story

By
JAMES HASKELL
As told to
Alan Schultz



Raoul Murtha was smiling queerly

Once, when I examined those drawers carefully, I found a most ingenious workmanship. At the corners, both upper and lower, there were triangular bracings involving an engineering principle I had never before seen applied to wooden furniture.

I found myself drawn to that attic. That the source of attraction was other than its commodious working facilities, I never guessed. But I began spending much of my time there, gradually rigging up a sort of experimental shop, with the old work bench as the central unit. In the afternoons

I could find no work at my trade, which is engineering, and so I had a lot of time on my hands.

A curious situation developed. I want, particularly, to report only the bare facts. Even at that, people will be inclined to set my story down as a fabrication. But I assure such people that I am as hard-headed a young man as they are likely to find in my profession, which is notoriously practical-minded.

I would sit down at my work bench and begin fiddling with my tools. Everything would be peaceful. Not a hum

I usually tinkered with a radio rheostat I was trying to perfect. It was not because I had much faith in myself as an inventor, but as I said,

in the air. Mother was usually resting at that time of the day. The tang of salt might be drifting through the open window from miles away down Flushing Bay. I would spend an hour or so in filing, hacking, making little figures on a scratch-pad.

Then, as my absorption increased, *a queer presence would come over the attic*. As if something had impregnated the air with sulphur. As if the eyes which I had sensed in that old house, were watching me more closely than ever.

At no time did I imagine it was the presence of a person. I would have been the first to laugh at such a notion. It seemed more like a force—something disembodied and queer. My mind went naturally to seeking a scientific explanation, even wondering whether it was not the rays of the sun reacting on the tools and material cluttering up the attic.

By early summer, the curious situation was occurring every afternoon I chose to work in the attic. Disinclined though I was to yield to any nervous reactions, the happenings interfered with my work, upsetting me. The force, whatever it was, would take possession of the attic and dominate me so that I had difficulty in keeping control of myself—and yet it remained invisible as well as inexplicable. How did I know anything was there? More by my own reactions than any outside evidence.

An uncanny unrest began affecting me. I could not keep away from the attic, and yet I dreaded my experiences. An attraction drew me, and yet a certain caution held me back.

About a fortnight after my observations were beginning to unsettle my peace of mind, the following took place:

I was hammering flat the edges of a copper plate, listening to the echoes of the blows sounding in the house below and wondering whether the noise was disturbing my mother, *when I became aware of the hammer growing heavier and heavier*. As if it were swelling in size or I were weakening!

I put more energy into my swinging. It did no good. The weight increased. The hammer dragged on my muscles. As heavy as a sledge! Frightened ideas ran through my head. I imagined I was suffering a stroke of paralysis or some other horrible stricture. I tore against the weight of the hammer. It became almost immovable and my arm was like a frozen member, remotely connected with my body. And then, with a slight jerk, just as my fingers were getting numb under the pressure I was applying, *the hammer was yanked out of my hand and sent flying across the room*.

It crashed into a large crayon portrait of an uncle of mine, which my sisters were too modern to permit my mother to hang downstairs. I mention the fact, because oddly enough, at that very moment, I thought of my mother's anger when she would find the torn canvas.

Not until a few seconds had passed, did fear grip me. I sat tight in my chair, dazed. My arm lay stiffly against the work bench, and from it flowed a succession of prickly sensations. They would start at my shoulder blade and sweep down through the tips of my fingers. No pain. Nothing unpleasant. But, weirdly, I could see the sensations, or whatever I should call them, *like electric sparks jumping off the ends of my fingers*.

Some power not of my own will was taking hold of me. I made an effort to rise. Something retarded me. The air had become like a net, it seemed. Symptoms of a fainting spell oppressed me. I was losing control of myself—definitely I realized that; I grew desperate. I stamped on the floor. To my surprise I could still move my feet. My idea was to get attention from below. But my heels hit the floor in a deadened thudding and I sank back into my chair, staring at a series of spinning head waves, revolving before me in a tall elliptical whirl, standing on one end, and moving, inch by inch, toward me!

"James! Oh, James!" my mother's voice came muffled

from below, as if she called me from another world.

Suddenly the tension vanished. The attic recovered its quiet. I stirred myself, rising from the chair, feeling slightly drowsy but otherwise normal, and went downstairs. My mother had some errand, I forget what, but I know she asked no questions, evidently noticing nothing startling in my appearance.

Were it not that I hesitate to influence the mind of anyone hearing my story, I would make clear at this point to what an extent I felt myself under the spell of the unseen. Let it suffice for me to say, that from the date of that odd experience I was convinced that the unseen eyes watching me were no illusion.

That very night came my adventure with Ella Bixbee. At the time I did not connect it with my experience in the attic.

After supper, still puzzled by my weird contact with the unknown, I went for a walk. Our house was in the midst of what had been an old colonial settlement and there were many interesting relics of a bygone age. There were vestiges of ancient fences, chimneys a hundred and fifty years old at least and trees over two hundred years old. More and more new houses were being built by real-estate companies, but as yet it was a pleasant neighborhood to walk in.

I was circling through the business street which led from the subway, when suddenly something struck me. Nerve-ridden as I was, my heart jumped into my mouth. I swerved to find a girl had stumbled against me, feebly trying to take hold of my arm and sinking slowly to the sidewalk. I grasped her about the waist and steadied her. My contact seemed to restore her, and I heard her whisper brokenly in my ear, "Oh, I'm so afraid, so afraid!"

"What is it?" I asked.

THE girl drew herself erect, pulling gently away from me. I saw that she was gloriously beautiful, and somehow one glance at her helped me regain my poise. She was sobbing now, trying to choke back her tears.

"Don't be afraid," I said. "Tell me."

And then I heard her say, in a tight, small voice:

"Oh, it's terrible; for a minute I lost myself. It was like dying. Oh, please take me home. Please!"

Whether I was more puzzled or delighted, I do not know. The girl was lovely to look at; but her actions were extraordinary.

While she had been talking to me, she was staring in a fixed, strained way over her left shoulder.

Suddenly she whispered, "It is *he*." There was terror in her voice and my eyes tore through the darkness in the direction in which she was still staring. After a few seconds I could make out a tall, dark figure, standing in a stiff, grotesque position.

"Who is he?" I asked.

There was a catch in the girl's voice as she said, "I don't know. Take me home. I had better not stay here any longer."

I had a notion to go over to the man and question him, but as I looked up again, he was gone. Nevertheless I could still feel his presence about us. You know how it is when you come into a dark room and feel sure someone is there beside you, though you can see nothing? Well, that was exactly how I felt and when I looked in the girl's eyes I could see she was worried and uneasy, too.

She was urging me to start and, after looking cautiously about, I let her take my arm and lead me. I felt a slight tremor in her hand and I said something about her not having anything to fear now. And, almost without thinking about it, I added, "Hadden't you better tell me what it's all about?"

The girl remained silent. But when I turned to see her face, she smiled kindly. I felt she was apologizing for her silence. But this was not enough for me; a compelling hunch



drove me on to be more insistent. I explained that whatever it was, it would be better for her to speak to someone about it, especially since I was quite ready to help. And, I did feel then that I would do anything in the world for her.

I was afraid, each time I questioned her further, that she would resent my inquisitiveness and send me packing. But I stuck to the issue. And finally she did say, "Oh, I can't tell you because I don't know. It was peculiar, dreadful and all jumbled. Like an outsider trying to force his way into my body. There! And you think I'm a fool!"

I assured her of my sympathy, though in fact I was deeply confused. What did she mean?

But no power of mine could elicit further information. Except that, at some point on our walk to her home, she told me her name was Ella Bixbee, she said nothing more. I was entranced by her delicate beauty, and after a while I was loath to disturb her further. Just to look at her was enough, and beyond telling her I was James Haskell I said no more, either.

At her door she said good night quickly and left me before I could ask to see her again. Reluctantly I started home.

The next afternoon I went eagerly to my workroom in the attic. My old hesitancy was gone, and as if I had a purpose, I went gladly.

For a while nothing happened. I became interested in my rheostat. I was hammering on a copper plate I intended to use as a bed for a new type of shielding appliance.

Then, suddenly, as on the previous occasion, the hammer acted bewitched. As if someone were dropping lead weights on its head! It resisted my efforts. The arc of its swing snapped shorter. My muscles trembled with fatigue. There was a sense of retarding, and I persisted against it, pushing harder. But the hammer held back. Like a thing with a will of its own!

I tugged. Sweat broke out on my forehead. My strength began ebbing. And again, abruptly, the hammer went flying out of my hand, across the room, sailing right through the exact tear it had previously made in the crayon portrait!

To my amazement, the copper plate which I had been hammering began to dance in short rhythmic leaps from the work bench! I looked on, stunned, uncomprehending. Then it flashed on me: the plate was going through a dot-and-dash alphabet! The Morse Code! I riveted my attention on it. I had once learned the code in a kids' telegraphy club I had organized.

The copper plate seemed possessed. I reached out for my pencil and scratch-pad, jotting down the letters as they came through:

C-R-Y-S-

My mind tried to leap ahead to a word, but *crys* meant nothing to me.

T-A-L-S-L-I-P-P-E-R.

There was a moment of silence after those letters, and then the dancing of the copper plate went on, in its dash-and-dot rhythm, and I took down the letters:

E-L-L-A-B-I-X-B-E-E-

And it stopped. I waited. Nothing more. The copper plate lay dead. No dancing. No sound.

My eyes went quickly from it to the scratch-pad, back and forth, trying to see sense in the letters, trying to see further movement in the copper plate. And then I began to study the message the letters indicated. The words, apparently, were *Crystal Slipper* and *Ella Bixbee*! Ella Bixbee was the name of the girl whom I had met in last night's mysterious adventure! But Crystal Slipper? It meant nothing to me.

I attempted to break up Crystal Slipper into other units, but could make no sensible words out of it. Not for a second did I doubt that this message had some deep meaning. The girl had so strongly impressed herself on my consciousness that I was ready to believe, in fact to cherish, anything which suggested her. But the first two words of the ghostly telegraphic message tied up with nothing I could think of.

For an hour, perhaps more, I sat there, puzzling over the words. What was their significance? I was positive they had importance. All the time, an enervating throbbing was going on in my finger tips, but I was giving it no thought beyond occasionally pressing my hands together to drive out the sensation. Suddenly, I realized that changes had occurred in the attic while I was concentrating on my message. The very atmosphere had grown turgid. In one spot, at least.

I looked at it, and could see a series of waves, resembling heat phenomena, coagulating in a whirl about an axis. Or so it seemed to me. It was like the flames of swiftly revolving spokes and the whole action was oddly similar to the haze of heat a person can see above the pavements on a scorching day.

My heart beats quickened to a gallop. My breath pounded away at my lungs. The haze seemed to slowly solidify! It took on a form! Blurred and inaccurate, but yet a form. *Of a person!* An oldish, gray man, all misty and bleared, seemed to focus for a moment and then disappear. Form—and then haze; form and then haze. Like the filament of an electric light, the thing glowed and waned—until, all at once, it took form and was an ancient man! That is, more like the picture of an ancient man. . . .

I was gripping my chair with a force which almost sent the blood through my fingers. The skin tingled under my nails.

The vision moved quickly to my work bench, pointed a misty finger at my scratch-pad and in a moment faded out.

I do not know how long it took me to recover a measure of control. Certain it is, I was shaken clean through. Had I seen a ghost? I could hardly believe my own experience. My inclination was, even then, to attribute it to some trick my head or eyes had played me. But I did look with a great respect on the scratch-pad to which the ghost had pointed. It seemed invested with a special significance now. And as I looked, I realized the scratch-pad was resting on a New York telephone book into which I had been looking for the names of two firms I was going to interview about a job. Possibly, the ghost had meant to point at the telephone book rather than the scratch-pad? Could there be any connection between its mysterious visit and the jobs I was after?

Back and forth through the mazes of my mind I sent the thought. It seemed illogical to believe my job could be of any moment to a spirit of the other world. Simultaneously with reaching this conclusion it occurred to me to look in

Sorcery in the Night-Clubs

Here is an amazing new novel of intrigue and mystery, set against the glamorous background of New York's gayest night-life. James Haskell, a young engineer, falls in love with a bewitched dancer and leaps recklessly into a weird duel with the Unknown.

You will find that Haskell's story is one of the most thrilling you have ever read!

the telephone book to see if *Crystal Slipper* was there! My fingers flipped the pages quickly; Crown, Cruet, Crump, Crystal—there it was! The *Crystal Slipper*! A night-club located in the mid-section of Manhattan!

So that was it! Ella Bixbee and the *Crystal Slipper* evidently had some connection. The thought attracted me. It offered a possibility of seeing the girl again. Once I saw it that way, I guess nothing could have kept me from going into New York that evening. I was afire with the idea. What was drawing me on into the strangest adventure of my life, was far from clear to me, but I knew I had to seek this opportunity to see Ella Bixbee again. I could not forget our curious meeting, nor her beauty and the music of her voice.

Eight o'clock that night, I left my home in Corona, telling the family I was off to a movie. I took the subway into Forty-Second Street and then went walking up Broadway. The *Crystal Slipper* and its address were tucked in my memory, and in my heart was a desire to see the mysterious girl whose beauty had bewitched me.

UP Broadway I went, bumping and being bumped as the way in the late theater rush, and all the time dawdling, despite the fever in me. As I see it now, I was a little afraid. The night life of New York was not exactly an open book to me. Caution held me in check.

Slowly, up the street of thousands of lights, I went—peeping at store windows, reading the colored theater signs, stopping to look over the gallery of daintily displayed nude photographs before a revue entrance. I was eager to get to the *Crystal Slipper*, and yet my feet dragged.

I even wandered into one of those automatic photograph studios and, plumping myself down on a seat, shot a quarter and waited to be snapped in eight different positions. I still have those pictures, and they show a face which is trying hard to look gay and calm. But it is clear that underneath the pose I was a much disturbed young man.

While I was standing near the chute where the finished photograph strip jumps out after the required few minutes are up, there was a rush of the crowd to the door at the bawling of a newspaper extra. I listened as the lusty vendors came past, and I heard a jumbled:

"Uxtra! Uxtra! Boo'leg Moider! Night Club Hostess Shot! Uxtra!"

My first impulse was to dash out and buy a copy. But on second thought I held back, realizing I was stupidly giving in to nervousness which was unfounded. After all, every hour in New York City brings forth a new newspaper sensation and it was foolish of me to imagine this one had any reference to the venture I had in mind.

I took myself in hand, but by the time I left the photograph studio my mouth was as dry as cinders. I stepped into a drug store for a drink and then started out again, up Broadway, walking briskly to get my blood going.

A half hour later I was sitting in a noisy, smoke-filled cabaret. There had been a small row over letting me in. All visitors were expected to show admittance cards. My face, however, saved the day. A rough-looking fellow, the manager I suppose, came up, took a squint at me and said contemptuously:

"Let him in. If he's a bull, I'm a piano tuner."

And straightway I was admitted. Evidently I looked too harmless or too well groomed, or something, to be a prohibition agent or a detective.

A hostess, yellow hair adorned with flaming strands of rhinestones and silver, conducted me to a seat, suggesting that if I wanted company I could have it. I excused myself, saying that for the present I would rather be alone. My thoughts were afire with the clue I was seeking. What was Ella Bixbee's connection with the place? As I looked about, it seemed hard to believe that so radiant a creature as she had any relation to the *Crystal Slipper*.

There was a mixed crowd of well-dressed people, mostly

in evening clothes, drinking, eating, chattering and dancing. In the center was a waxed floor, roped off from the surrounding tables, where couples were dancing to the strains of an orchestra occupying a raised dais at the end of the large room we were in.

A waiter approached and I ordered. For the rest, no one seemed to notice me. An orchestral number was on, the players acting as if they had the St. Vitus affliction. It was a contortion of stuttering music wherein the saxophones struggled against two valiant piccolos.

While the couples were dancing I eagerly scanned their faces, seeking for Ella Bixbee. You may say I had slim evidence on which to base my certainty that she was in the *Crystal Slipper*. But when you are actually caught up in the rush of exciting events, you do not stop to coldly sift evidence. I had heard the message of the dancing copper plate, and I was firmly convinced I would find Ella Bixbee at the *Crystal Slipper*, and that it was extremely important I should do so.

The dance selection ended. Later the music struck up again and two entertainers ran out to the center of the waxed floor. I craned my neck to see them plainly. By this time, I was convinced Ella Bixbee was among the entertainers of the *Crystal Slipper*. I had studied every face, at the tables and on the floor. Not one of the women had the faintest resemblance to the beauty I was seeking.

The two entertainers on the floor were men. They were dressed in Russian blouses, high leather boots, fur caps and gaily colored breeches. They bowed to a perfunctory applause and began a series of Russian melodies, varying the songs with snatches of wild dancing which were supposed to be peasant steps in the days before the Czars fell. The men shouted "Hayh" loudly after each difficult twist and the sweat poured from under their fur caps.

My eyes began to blink and they felt heavy and hot. I turned away from the exhibition. As I settled myself in my chair I became aware of a tall, immaculately dressed man, with a sabre cut across his left cheek, standing near me and fixedly gazing at me with his black eyes. It struck me at once that he had been staring at me for a few minutes, and that somehow he was the cause of my sleepy feeling.

"Alone?" asked the man with the sabre cut.

"Why, yes."

"May I share the table with you?"

"Certainly," I answered, feeling myself winning back my alertness, though for a minute he had quite rattled me. "But I'm afraid this table isn't much good. The dancers seem to prefer to give their exhibition in the farthest corner of the dance floor."

"THANK you. It does not matter whether I see those Russian hoofers trying to sing—or are they Russian singers trying to dance? They hardly interest me."

The man took the other seat at my table in the manner of a gentleman easily bored but polite under his weariness. But I felt he was studying my face, from under his heavy lashes. His face was thin, with a high forehead and closely cropped black hair. Altogether there was an air of command, of compelling power about the man.

"You are thinking of me, instead of enjoying the offerings of this cabaret?" he said startlingly, as if he were stating a fact and at the same time calling me to task for daring to scrutinize him.

"I beg your pardon," I answered, and to ease off matters added, "You have an interesting face—but I see you can read my mind."

I laughed, meaning to offset the slightly insulting note of his remark and to open further conversation. I thought it a good opportunity to make inquiries about Ella Bixbee. I was utterly unprepared for his answer.

"Of course I can read your mind! That is a small matter. The Hindus have that all worked out."

It can be understood that in conversation of such a nature

I am quite out of my depth. The man seemed to know it, too, and he turned his head, lazily looking over the guests, and remarked:

"I am really waiting for the next number. It is quite beautiful. A most lovely girl who can actually dance and whose voice is silvery."

I said to myself this unusual man could surely help me locate Ella. Evidently he was familiar with the routine of the Crystal Slipper, and I was on the point of asking him, when the tall, sabre-scarred fellow added:

"You better save your attention for her. I tell you she is a delight. Imagine—a slip of girl brought up on Long Island and she can dance the Hindu ritual steps with the grace of a native! What a girl!"

A wild idea struck me that he was talking of the very girl I was seeking. Long Island—on that one clue I based my guess.

"I believe I have heard of her. You mean Ella Bixbee?" I said as casually as I could.

"Ah! So you know her? Well, she will be famous some day." He regarded me thoughtfully. "It seems to me your face is somewhat familiar. I haven't seen you with Miss Bixbee?"

"No, certainly not."

MY heart was in my mouth. Tensely, I sat watching this strange man. His eyes now turned away from me and I was glad of the opportunity to study his face. Familiar? It was exactly the feeling I had about him! I was sure that I had seen him before!

He began talking and there was a rapt look in those black eyes of his, as though he were lost in some mystical exaltation. His words came slowly, as though his mind were far away and could barely manage to travel back to speak to me. It rather upset me.

"I am familiar with Oriental dancing," the man with the sabre cut was saying. "You see, I am a student of the occult."

Unaccountably a sense of alarm enveloped me. It fretted me with an urge to get up at once and leave the ominous presence of the man. An unhealthy radiance seemed to come from him.

"I attended a school of the occult in Germany for years," he went on. "Few people ever heard of the school. Nevertheless, it is a remarkable institution. Phenomena happen there which could revolutionize the world."

He fixed me with his eyes and I had a sense of stealthy hands tightening about my throat. There was an odd nasality in the man's voice which at the same time was grim with threat and yet dulling to my wakefulness, as if his voice were lulling me to sleep. His talking was a droning which made my eyes heavy and I had to shake myself into attention. I felt it would be better for me to talk of something practical.

"My name is James Haskell," I said and the suave formidable-looking man with the sabre cut nodded his head.

"I am Raoul Murtha," he replied. "My mother was French. It has done much to my character—but ah! there is my favorite."

He pointed to the dance floor. I glanced up quickly, alert in every fiber, and for a breath-taking moment I stood entranced before the first vision I ever had of Ella Bixbee in her stage raiment. It was a captivating sight.

A slim, graceful figure of radiant beauty, whirling through the opening steps of a quick tempo Oriental dance. Her hair was of a burnished gold with the hint of fire tips in its coloring and her eyes seemed now blue, now gray as she whirled about, trailing gossamer veils. She was clad in the native costume of a Hindu dancing girl.

Only by a wrench of my imagination could I see in the heavenly vision the girl whom I had rescued from a fainting spell only the night before, near the subway in Corona, Long Island. I saw this despite my admission that at my first sight of her the night before I had thought her gloriously beautiful.

But this dancing vision I was seeing at the Crystal Slipper was a thing unearthly in its infinite seductiveness and grace.

I heard Raoul Murtha's voice beside me. "Is she not ravishing?" he asked in the voice of a smitten man.

"The most lovely girl in seven worlds," I answered, feeling at once a mad jealousy of this man who had seen Ella Bixbee dance before I had ever had a sight of her. It seemed unfair, grossly cruel, that anyone should have known her before I did.

"I am mad about the girl," he said in a hoarse whisper. He was standing now, his eyes glued to the exhibition patch where the colored lights were playing a shifting circle of glaring brilliance. I wondered why this stranger spoke thus frankly to me, and as I watched him from a corner of my eye I realized he was a man who feared no one and recognized no restraints. Some weird power was his, and he did not keep it hidden. The temptation to use it had overcome him; and a strange fear stole insidiously over me.

There was a two-minute rest between numbers, and Raoul Murtha and I were sitting quietly together again. He was completely ignoring me now.

"Is Ella Bixbee a friend of yours?" I asked.

"Not quite."

"I see," said I. "A new acquaintance?"

"Rather. She is a little shy. I have been out to her home. You must be formal with her kind; she is what they call a good girl." He laughed a short, rasping laugh which chilled me to the bone.

"Anyone can see she is a lady," I replied.

"Yes, yes; that is what intrigues me. I am an old friend of the girl she lives with, a Miss Dixie Lee."

To the soft music of the now subdued orchestra, Ella Bixbee was gliding through the ecstatic gesturing of her second dance, and with every movement she was weaving a net around my heart. By all the symptoms, I was a man deeply in love. I must have fallen quicker than a man is shot, at my first glimpse of her the night before, and on this evening I could hardly contain myself for the expansive ardor which filled me. It happens like that sometimes, and I know it happened to me. Something in me rushed out to embrace her, each time she danced past me.

And yet my feeling was not of unmixed happiness. At the same time I was experiencing the delight over Ella, her dancing, her beauty—I was irritated by the nearness of Raoul Murtha. The man with the sabre cut oppressed me. His gluttonous eyes, staring at Ella, offended me. I was conscious of a sort of unwholesomeness originating from that man and I hated him.

A salvo of applause broke at the end of Ella Bixbee's dancing. People turned enthusiastically to one another.

"She belongs in the Follies," I heard someone say, and I remember the comment of a man who swore she was a better dancer than the finest European schools could turn out.

ON all sides of me came expressions of acclaim. "A natural dancer." "Graceful as a dream." "Superb!"

I listened with pride, as if the remarks conferred a glory on me. In glancing around, I encountered the eyes of Raoul Murtha, who was now sitting down, smiling sphinx-like, mysteriously engaged with his own thoughts. He motioned to me to lean over the table and he whispered in my ear:

"Listen to them! Has them all crazy. And none of them can come near her. I hold the barrier."

At the time the words did not strike me with their thunderous significance. I merely stared, dumfounded, as if asking for further enlightenment. He said no more on the subject but added, "Let them rave! I have an appointment with her for tonight."

There was an immeasurable arrogance in his voice and his eyes narrowed to piggyish slits.

"Going out to Long Island tonight?" I suggested in a

voice which was only partly asking a question of him.

"What's that?" A keen shrewdness was in his face.

"You may not recall, sir, but you told me the young lady lives on Long Island."

"Yes, of course. But tonight we're having a real party. Not on Long Island. No, sir. Her friend and mine, Dixie Lee, has arranged it."

"And is Dixie Lee what they call a good girl, too?"

For a minute I thought he would ignore my question. It was pitched a little too insolently. But he said, "You can judge for yourself. She is in the 'General Darling' ensemble of soldier girls. I'll point her out."

"Thank you."

"And Ella Bixbee leads the number," he added, winking at me—but in his eyes was no merriment. Rather the piercing glance of a man who was telling me I was beginning to be a nuisance.

A burst of applause! Ella Bixbee was under the lights again. Smarter looking and with a whimsical quality of cuteness, she wore a trim military outfit, which showed her attractive figure to advantage. She looked quietly about her and one knew at once that her poise was not the studied calm of an old actress, but rather the simple innocence of a young girl who was doing what she knew best and took it as naturally as if she were boiling a pot of potatoes.

NO doubt, part of the hold she had on the sophisticated audience in the night-club was due to her simplicity. At the sight of her innocent beauty they all loved her—and as for me, my heart did a somersault every time she came into a straight line with my vision and I could see her face.

The man with the sabre cut kept rising to his feet in his excitement. Suddenly he stepped away to speak to a Jap, attired in a chauffeur's uniform. They stood close to one another, Murtha seemingly demanding something. The Jap's reply angered him. A spurt of red shot into his sabre scar and his hand rose as if to strike. Just in time, Murtha restrained himself, an ironic smile breaking out on his face. The Jap who had stepped back quickly, bowed cringingly and, feeling under his outer coat with his hand, brought out a manila envelope which he gave to Murtha.

The man with the sabre cut dismissed the Jap, returning to our table. He glanced in my direction, but I pretended to be absorbed in the program.

The next time I stole a look at him, he was pouring something from the envelope into a tumbler of water. He drank it off in a gulp.

Ella Bixbee was leading the ensemble of soldier girls through a series of semi-military formations, set to a tripping tune, and it made a brave sight. Murtha and I were watching intently. The lines came to a halt with Ella Bixbee almost directly in front of both of us.

Suddenly I saw a look of alarm in Ella's eyes. From her I looked quickly toward my companion. Raoul Murtha was smiling queerly. Then I saw his head jerk back, in an odd, stiff movement almost as if he were falling. And yet he maintained his posture. I saw his arms oscillate jerkily and then grow rigid, the fingers of his hands extended fanwise, in a sclerotic immovability. . . . An amazing transformation had come over him. A pallor blanketed his waxen features; his shoulders heaved in and out twice and finally settled back further than it seemed possible for human shoulders to go. A rigidity, motionless and stony, set in over his whole body. . . .

There was a scream! A shuffling of chairs pushed back. A murmur of voices. The indiscriminate hum of panic getting under way! And Ella lay motionless on the floor! The girl's body was as rigid as an inanimate thing!

People had risen. A group of performers and waiters gathered about the fallen form of Ella Bixbee. . . . They were stooping over her. Someone called for water. And there was a voice asking whether there was a doctor in the house.

Almost by instinct I ran forward. As I tried to wedge into the group about Ella, the strong arms of the doorman held me off, telling me to keep cool. The manager was rushing about from table to table advising everybody to hold steady, that there was really nothing wrong—and then I saw the waiters pick up Ella's unconscious body and carry her toward the dressing rooms.

The guests were maintaining a semblance of order, but on all sides I could hear excited voices:

"That's exactly what happened last week!"

"It isn't in the act, is it?"

"You'd swear she was mesmerized, now, wouldn't you?"

"Poor child—is she ill?"

I followed the waiters who were carrying Ella. The group passed my table and as I came abreast of it, I saw to my horror that Murtha was still standing in exactly the same frozen position in which I had left him! Like a stone statue, but revoltingly hateful. . . .

No one seemed to be paying any attention to him. The waiters carrying Ella were the target for all eyes. Strangely, it seemed to me, I was the only one who realized the grotesque position of the man with the sabre cut. I stopped. It entered my mind that Murtha was in a strange cataleptic fit. I had heard of such peculiar trances—seizures which put their victims in a state of psychic control.

Immediately, I decided to test my guess. Instead of following the waiters out, I hurried toward the immobile Murtha, intending to stick him with a pin, or at least pinch him, to see whether he was actually under the spell of a cataleptic fit. . . .

Before I could reach him, he shook himself like a dog coming out of a pond, and every semblance of his trance was gone. He fumbled with his hair, and as I came up he greeted me with a nonchalant smile.

"Did you see what happened?" I cried.

The suddenness of my question must have caught him off guard. To my astonishment I heard him reply:

"I could not resist doing it—"

"What?"

A sobering alertness came into his face. He drew out a cigarette, proceeded elaborately to light it and spoke again:

"I say, it was a pretty sight; irresistible, the grace of the girl. She fainted like a flower bending under a storm."

He was eyeing me shrewdly. I resolved on a bold stroke. Speaking low and with a stinging directness, I said, "It looked more like a girl yielding to a spell."

"Don't be fantastic, my young friend; you must not let such things trick your mind." His smile was hateful and the corners of his lips were challenging.

"Such things have happened before," I said.

"Probably she has overworked. Ella is fragile, you know."

Confused impressions were swirling about in my mind. At moments I felt I was on the trail of something, and then again I realized it was foolish of me to get wrought up over such slight suspicions. It was quite possible I was entirely on the wrong track. Nevertheless, a theory was forming itself. . . .

A VOICE came from the orchestra platform. The manager was apologizing for the interruption, announcing at the same time Miss Ella Bixbee's regrets and that she was feeling better and would resume her work on the next night as usual.

The guests applauded wildly. The dancing of Ella Bixbee had charmed them, and they were ready to give her an encouraging hand under the circumstances. A group of under-the-weather college boys at a corner table stood up and gave her three hoarse cheers with much gusto.

Raoul Murtha and I were sitting at our table. He was alternately drinking and looking at his watch. I was wrapped up in my own thoughts. "I could not resist doing it!"—what had he meant? There was something more to the situation than was apparent on the surface. Of that I was sure.

A swarthy, round-faced man, with a low forehead and eyes with a suggestion of slant in them, approached us. He was in a tuxedo; but his linen was soiled.

"This is 'Slink' Mustapoy, the owner of the Crystal Slipper," said Murtha to me.

I shook hands and sat down again.

"Put it in my car?" asked the man with the sabre cut.

"Sure 'nough. You pay, I do. What else?" The accent of Slink Mustapoy was doubtful. It had a flavor of the Chinese and yet was not Chinese. It did not increase my liking for him.

"Good boy! Nothing must interfere with my party tonight. It must be memorable," said Murtha.

"Velly nice. 'Slong not here. Doan forget she mine."

Raoul Murtha laughed his unpleasant chortle and glanced my way. I could see he was angry again at what I had overheard, but quite suavely he said, "Easy, there, Slink; a stranger might misunderstand your meaning."

SLINK took in the fact that I was not a crony of Murtha's and said quickly, "No, no. I mean say Ella Bixbee swell dancer. Blings people. Dat my bleed and butter. See?"

"Sure, I know. I come here myself to see her," answered the man with the sabre cut, and they both laughed as if at a private joke.

Slink sobered up first. With the air of a man trying to be polite under difficulties, he said, "Doan you fo'get I need lovely dance lady here tomorrow."

What could such words mean? There was a rumble of threat in them. I could see Raoul Murtha scowl at Slink and wave him away, saying, "Don't you wrinkle your ugly pan over what I do. Any damage, I make good!"

Their conversation could mean one thing. Grave danger threatened Ella. Every word pointed to it. Yet I felt helpless. I could see no course of action specifically open to me. And even as I thought this, horror settled on me as I felt Raoul Murtha's black eyes boring into my brain. Was he really reading my mind? It seemed to me, at the time, he was aware of every secret thought of mine. To sit before him any longer was a torture I could not bear. I rose and went quickly toward the door.

I found myself out in the long corridor skirting all the rooms of the Crystal Slipper. It was dusky and narrow, leading from the front entrance past the main entertaining room, back to a series of dressing room, kitchens, liquor caches, cloak rooms and rest rooms. Most of it was quite dark and there seemed an endless number of doors.

Leaning against the wall, under a light, I made a desperate effort to get my thoughts in order. One thing was clear: Raoul Murtha had an engagement with Ella Bixbee for that very evening—and it was threatening her safety! Immediate action was necessary if I was to be of any use to

her, and I wanted supremely not to fail her in this crisis.

I pulled out a card and wrote on it hurriedly:

Dear Miss Bixbee:

Possibly you have already forgotten James Haskell who escorted you home last night—but may he see you for a few minutes? At once?

My heart was racing and I had a strange feeling of a heavy weight over the top of my head. The smoke in the main room had been pretty bad. I waited until one of the servers passed and handed him the card, telling him to take it to Miss Bixbee. I pushed some coins into his palm.

He took the card, insolently reading it, looking very knowing. Evidently he thought he was eavesdropping on a juicy flirtation and his smirk made me want to punch his face.

"Take it in at once," I added with a touch of anger, and he went down the hallway to the rear.

Now that I had taken the plunge, I stood nervously shivering, waiting for anything to happen. *Anything!* One thing only I knew; I must not turn back. I had seen Ella Bixbee, the rich golden fire in her hair, the heavenly gracefulness of her movements, the sweetness in her voice—and there was nothing on earth I would not do to save her from danger.

My imagination began to play with the word—*danger*. Uneasy thoughts popped into my head. I felt myself walking down the corridor, into a patch of darkness. I knew what I was doing, yet I could not stop. It was as though an electrical force was pulling at me. A strange tugging, like a resistless magnetism! My hand turned a doorknob. I found myself in a semi-lit room, with bottles ranged along the walls. I walked forward unsteadily, grieving in my heart that I was doing this foolish thing. And then suddenly, I saw, crouching in a corner of the room, the Jap in chauffeur's uniform, who had spoken to the man with the sabre cut! A long, gleaming knife was in his hand. . . .

A cold fear paralyzed me, for I knew that I was going to attack that crouching Jap, and that inevitably he would plunge his long knife into me. I knew it and yet I could not prevent myself from going on. The door I had just opened was only a few feet in back of me, nevertheless it was utterly beyond my power to run back.

Hopelessly I moved on toward that crouching, sinister figure who held death for me in his hand. A current was sucking me on, or rather it seemed some remorseless force was driving me from the corridor. An agony of horror like an endless nausea filled me. Ten feet, seven feet—I was five feet away from the gleaming point of the knife!

I saw the Jap's eyes snap; he raised himself a little, and my heart sank completely out of me.

Is Haskell doomed to fail in his frantic effort to save the lovely dancer from the evil hands of Raoul Murtha? How can he escape from the murderous Jap? Don't miss the thrilling revelations in the next issue! The secret of Murtha's power—and the meaning of the apparition seen by the young engineer—will be disclosed in the August GHOST STORIES, on all news stands July 23rd.



The Specter that

"YES," she said, from her seat in the dark corner, "I'll tell you an experience if you care to listen. And, what's more, I'll tell it briefly, without trimmings—I mean without unessentials. That's a thing story-tellers never do, you know." She laughed. "They drag in all the unessentials and leave their listeners to disentangle them; but I'll give you just the essentials, and you can make of it what you please. But on one condition: that at the end you ask no questions, because I can't explain it and have no wish to."

We agreed. We were all serious. After listening to a dozen prolix stories from people who merely wished to "talk," but had nothing to tell, we wanted "essentials."

In those days (she began, feeling from the quality of our silence that we were with her) in those days I was interested in psychic things, and had arranged to sit up alone in a haunted house in the middle of London. It was a cheap and dingy lodging-house in a mean street, unfurnished. I had already made a preliminary examination in daylight that afternoon, and the keys from the caretaker, who lived next door, were in my pocket. The



"Put your arms
around me . . .
for the love of
God!" he cried

story was a good one—satisfied me, at any rate, that it was worth investigating; and I won't weary you with details as to the woman's murder and all the tiresome elaboration as to why the place was *alive*. Enough that it was.

I was a good deal bored, therefore, to see a man, whom I took to be the talkative old caretaker, waiting for me on the steps when I went in at 11 P.M., for I had sufficiently explained that I wished to be there alone for the night.

"I wished to show you *the room*," he mumbled, and of course I couldn't exactly refuse, having tipped him for the temporary loan of a chair and table.

In the haunted house, this terrified girl confronted a tortured soul that begged for LOVE—and she dared to do the bravest thing imaginable!

Asked for a Kiss

The Woman's Ghost Story

By ALGERNON BLACKWOOD

Author of

The Listener, Tongues of Fire, etc.



I stuck there, hesitating, shaking—

find myself in an empty house with a stranger. Something of my confidence left me. Confidence with women, you know, is all humbug after a certain point. Or perhaps you don't know, for most of you are men. But anyhow my pluck ebbed in a quick rush, and I felt afraid.

"Who are you?" I repeated quickly and nervously. The fellow was well dressed, youngish and good-looking, but with a face of great sadness. I myself was barely thirty. I am giving you essentials, or I would not mention it. Out of quite ordinary things comes this story. I think that's why it has value.

"No," he said. "I'm the man who was frightened to death."

HIS voice and his words ran through me like a knife, and I felt ready to drop. In my pocket was the book I had brought to make notes in. I felt the pencil sticking in the socket. I felt, too, the extra warm things I had put on to sit up in, as no bed or sofa was available—a hundred things dashed through my mind, foolishly and without sequence or meaning, as the way is when one is really frightened. Unessentials leaped up and puzzled me, and I thought of what the papers might say if it came out, and what my "smart" brother-in-law would think, and whether it would be told that I had cigarettes in my pocket, and was a free-thinker.

"The man who was frightened to death!" I repeated agast.

"That's me," he said stupidly.

I stared at him just as you would have done—anyone of you men now listening to me—and felt my life ebbing and flowing like a sort of hot fluid. You needn't laugh! That's how I felt. Small things, you know, touch the mind with great earnestness, when terror is there—real terror. But I might have been at a middle-class tea party, for all the ideas I had: they were so ordinary!

"But I thought you were the caretaker I tipped this afternoon to let me sleep here!" I gasped. "Did—did Carey send you to meet me?"

"No," he replied in a voice that touched my boots somehow. "I am the man who was frightened to death. And what is more, I am frightened now!"

"So am I!" I managed to utter, speaking instinctively. "I'm simply terrified."

"Yes," he replied in that same odd voice that seemed

"Come in then, and let's be quick," I said ungraciously.

We went in, he shuffling after me through the unlighted hall up to the first floor where the murder had taken place, and I prepared myself to hear his inevitable account before turning him out with the half-crown his persistence had earned. After lighting the gas I sat down in the arm-chair he had provided—a faded, brown plush arm-chair—and turned for the first time to face him and get through with the performance as quickly as possible. And it was in that instant I got my first shock. The man was *not* the caretaker. It was not the old fool, Carey, I had interviewed earlier in the day and made my plans with. My heart gave a horrid jump.

"Now who are you, pray?" I said. "You're not Carey, the man I arranged with this afternoon. Who are you?"

I felt uncomfortable, as you may imagine. I was a "psychical researcher," and a young woman of new tendencies, and proud of my liberty, but I did not care to

to sound within me. "But you are still in the flesh, and I—am not!"

I felt the need for vigorous self-assertion. I stood up in that empty, unfurnished room, digging the nails into my palms and clenching my teeth. I was determined to assert my individuality and my courage as a new woman and a free soul.

"You mean to say you are not in the flesh!" I gasped. "What in the world are you talking about?"

The silence of the night swallowed up my voice. For the first time I realized that darkness was over the city; that dust lay upon the stairs; that the floor above was untenanted and the floor below empty. I was alone in an unoccupied and haunted house, unprotected, and a woman. I chilled. I heard the wind round the house, and knew the stars were hidden. My thoughts rushed to policemen and omnibuses, and everything that was useful and comforting. I suddenly realized what a fool I was to come to such a house alone. I was icily afraid. I thought the end of my life had come. I was an utter fool to go in for psychical research when I had not the necessary nerve.

"Good God!" I gasped. "If you're not Carey, the man I arranged with, who are you?"

I was really stiff with terror. The man moved slowly towards me across the empty room. I held out my arm to stop him, getting up out of my chair at the same moment, and he came to a halt just opposite to me, a smile on his worn, sad face.

"I told you who I am," he repeated quietly with a sigh, looking at me with the saddest eyes I have ever seen, "and I am frightened still."

By this time I was convinced that I was entertaining either a rogue or a madman, and I cursed my stupidity in bringing the man in without having seen his face. My mind was quickly made up, and I knew what to do. Ghosts and psychic phenomena flew to the winds. If I angered the creature my life might pay the price. I must humor him till I got to the door, and then race for the street. I stood bolt upright and faced him. We were about of a height, and I was a strong, athletic woman who played hockey in winter, and climbed Alps in summer. My hand itched for a stick, but I had none.

"Now, of course, I remember," I said with a sort of stiff smile that was very hard to force. "Now I remember your case and the wonderful way you behaved. . ."

The man stared at me stupidly, turning his head to watch me as I backed more and more quickly to the door. But when his face broke into a smile I could control myself no longer. I reached the door in a run, and shot out on to the landing. Like a fool, I turned the wrong way, and stumbled over the stairs leading to the next story. But it was too late to change. The man was after me, I was sure, though no sound of footsteps came; and I dashed up the next flight, tearing my skirt and banging my ribs in the darkness, and rushed headlong into the first room I came to. Luckily the door stood ajar, and still more fortunately there was a key in the lock. In a second I had slammed the door, flung my whole weight against it and turned the key.

I was safe, but my heart was beating like a drum. A second later it seemed to stop altogether, for I saw that there was someone else in the room besides myself. A man's figure stood between me and the windows, where the street lamps gave just enough light to outline his shape against the glass. I'm a plucky woman, you know, for even then I didn't give up hope, but I may tell you that I have never felt so vilely frightened in all my born days. I had locked myself in with him!

The man leaned against the window, watching me where

I lay in a collapsed heap upon the floor. So there were two men in the house with me, I reflected. Perhaps other rooms were occupied too! What could it all mean? But, as I stared, something changed in the room, or in me—hard to say which—and I realized my mistake, so that my fear, which had so far been physical, at once altered its character and became *psychical*. I became afraid in my soul instead of in my heart, and I knew immediately who this man was.

"How in the world did you get up here?" I stammered to him across the empty room, amazement momentarily stemming my fear.

"Now, let me tell you," he began, in that odd far-away voice of his that went down my spine like a knife. "I'm in different space, for one thing, and you'd find me in any room you went into; for, according to your way of measuring, I'm *all over the house*. Space is a bodily condition, but I am all out of the body, and am not affected by space. It's my condition that keeps me here. I want something to change my condition for me, for then I could get away. What I want is sympathy. Or, really, more than sympathy; I want affection—I want *love*!"

WHILE he was speaking I gathered myself slowly upon my feet. I wanted to scream and cry and laugh all at once, but I only succeeded in sighing, for my emotion was exhausted and a numbness was coming over me. I felt for matches in my pocket and made a movement towards the gas jet.

"I should be much happier if you didn't light the gas," he said at once, "for the vibrations of your light hurt me a good deal. You need not be afraid that I shall injure you. I can't touch your body to begin with, for there's a great gulf fixed, you know; and really this half-light suits me best. Now, let me continue what I was trying to say before. You know, so many people have come to this house to see me, and most of them have seen me, and one and all have been terrified. If only, oh, if only someone would be *not* terrified, but kind and loving to me! Then you see, I might be able to change my condition and get away."

His voice was so sad that I felt tears start somewhere at the back of my eyes; but fear kept all else in check, and I stood shaking and cold as I listened to him.

"Who are you then? Of course Carey didn't send you, I know now," I managed to utter. My thoughts scattered dreadfully and I could think of nothing to say. I was afraid of a stroke.

"I know nothing about Carey or who he is," continued the man quietly, "and the name my body had, I have forgotten, thank God; but I am the man who was frightened to death in this house ten years ago, and I have been frightened ever since, and am frightened still; for the succession of cruel and curious people who come to this house to see the ghost, and thus keep alive its atmosphere

of terror, only helps to render my condition worse. If only someone would be kind to me—*laugh*, speak gently and rationally with me, cry if they like, pity, comfort, soothe me—anything but come here in curiosity and tremble as you are now doing in that corner. Now, madam, won't you take pity on me?" His voice rose to a dreadful cry. "Won't you step out into the middle of the room and try to love me a little?"

A horrible laughter came gurgling up in my throat as I heard him, but the sense of pity was stronger than the laughter, and I found myself actually leaving the support of the wall and approaching the center of the floor.

"By God!" he cried, at once straightening up against the window, "you have done a kind act. That's the first attempt at sympathy that has been shown me since I died,



and I feel better already. In life, you know, I was a misanthrope. Everything went wrong with me, and I came to hate my fellow men so much that I couldn't bear to see them even. Of course, like begets like, and this hate was returned. Finally I suffered from horrible delusions, and my room became haunted with demons that laughed and grinned, and one night I ran into a whole cluster of them near the bed—and the fright stopped my heart and killed me. It's hate and remorse, as much as terror, that clogs me so thickly and keeps me here. If only someone could feel pity, and sympathy, and perhaps a little love for me, I could get away and be happy. When you came this afternoon to look over the house I watched you, and a little hope came to me for the first time. I saw you had courage, originality, resource—love. If only I could touch your heart, without frightening you, I knew I could perhaps put that love you have stored up in your being there, and thus borrow the wings for my escape!"

Now I must confess my heart began to ache a little as fear left me and the man's words sank their sad meaning into me. Still, the whole affair was so incredible, and so touched with unholy quality, and the story of a woman's murder I had come to investigate had so obviously nothing to do with this thing, that I felt myself in a kind of wild dream that seemed likely to stop at any moment and leave me somewhere in bed after a nightmare.

MOREOVER, his words possessed me to such an extent that I found it impossible to reflect upon anything else at all, or to consider adequately any ways or means of action or escape.

I moved a little nearer to him in the gloom, horribly frightened, of course, but with the beginnings of a strange determination in my heart.

"You women," he continued, his voice plainly thrilling at my approach, "you wonderful women, to whom life often brings no opportunity of spending your great love, oh, if you only could know how many of us simply yearn for it! It would save our souls, if you but knew. Few might find the chance that you now have, but if you only spent your love freely, without definite object, just letting it flow openly for all who need, you would reach hundreds and thousands of souls like me, and *release us!* Oh, madam, I ask you again to feel with me, to be kind and gentle—and if you can, to love me a little!"

My heart did leap within me and this time the tears did come, for I could not restrain them. I laughed, too, for the way he called me "madam" sounded so odd, here in this empty room at midnight in a London street, but my laughter stopped dead and merged in a flood of weeping when I saw how my change of feeling affected him. He had left his place by the window and was kneeling on the floor at my feet, his hands stretched out towards me, and the first signs of a kind of glory about his head.

"Put your arms around me and kiss me, for the love of God!" he cried. "Kiss me, oh, kiss me, and I shall

be freed! You have done so much already—now do this!"

I stuck there, hesitating, shaking, my determination on the verge of action, yet not quite able to compass it. But the terror had almost gone.

"Forget that I'm a man and you're a woman," he continued in the most beseeching voice I ever heard. "Forget that I'm a ghost, and come boldly and press me to you with a great kiss, and let your love flow into me. Forget yourself just for one minute and do a brave thing! Oh, love me, *love me*, LOVE ME! and I shall be free!"

The words, or the deep force they somehow released in the center of my being, stirred me profoundly, and an emotion infinitely greater than fear surged up over me and carried me with it across the edge of action. Without hesitation I took two steps forward towards him where he knelt, and held out my arms. Pity and love were in my heart at that moment, genuine pity, I swear, and genuine love. I forgot myself and my little tremblings in a great desire to help this desperate, forsaken soul.

"I love you! Poor, aching, unhappy thing! I love you." I cried through hot tears, "and I am not the least bit afraid in the world."

The man uttered a curious sound, like laughter, yet not laughter, and turned his face up to me. The light from the street below fell on it, but there was another light, too, shining all round it, that seemed to come from the eyes and skin. He rose to his feet and met me, and in that second I folded him to my breast and kissed him full on the lips again and again.

(All our pipes had gone out, and not even a skirt rustled in that dark studio as the story-teller paused a moment to steady her voice, and put a hand softly up to her eyes before going on again.)

NOW, what can I say and how can I describe to you, all you skeptical men sitting there with pipes in your mouths, the amazing sensation I experienced of holding

an intangible, impalpable thing so closely to my heart that it touched my body with equal pressure all the way down, and then melted away somewhere into my very being? For it was like seizing a rush of cool wind and feeling a touch of burning fire the moment it had struck its swift blow and passed on. A series of shocks ran all over and all through me; a momentary ecstasy of flaming sweetness and wonder thrilled down into me; my heart gave another great leap—and then I was alone.

The room was empty. I turned on the gas and struck a match to prove it. All fear had left me, and something was singing round me in the air and in my heart like the joy of a spring morning in youth. Not all the devils or shadows or hauntings in the world could then have caused me a single tremor.

I unlocked the door and went all over the dark house, even into kitchen and cellar and up among the ghostly attics. But the house was empty. Something had left it. I lingered a short hour, analyzing, thinking, wondering—you can guess what and how, perhaps, but I won't detail, for I promised only essen- (Continued on page 91)

The Frightened Ghost

You have never read a story like this one. No one else could have written it except Algernon Blackwood, one of England's greatest authors of occult masterpieces.

It is the story of a young man who died in fear—and of his dreadful existence *afterward!* It shows how terror can make its home even in the heart of a disembodied Thing—and how a living woman's love is strong enough to shatter the darkness of hell itself!

A RECKONING

It took three foolhardy youths to penetrate the secret of the ancient burial vault. What two of them found, no one will ever know. The third—the sole survivor—has a blood-curdling tale to tell

By JAMES RHODES

As told to A. M. THOMPSON

IF there is anyone who doesn't believe in ghosts, I'd like to have him explain the following story for me. I'll admit I'm mystified.

I am, and have been for twenty-two years, Superintendent of the Forest Hill Cemetery at Middleton. One June morning, not long ago, three young men, students in our State University, applied to me for work. They explained that pushing a lawn-mower during their summer vacation would keep their muscles in good trim for football in the fall. They wanted to be in the open air and assured me they would welcome all the heavy work I could give them. Naturally, I hired them.

In this cemetery stands an ancient burial vault, covered with moss and about ready to tumble down. The roof is almost hidden by a rank growth of weeds and grass. It is a low structure of hewn sandstone blocks, half above and half below the ground. The mortar has been forced out of the crevices by grass and moss. The original door rotted away long before my time, and one of my predecessors had stuck up in its place a rough board door he had made himself.

The lot surrounding the vault is overgrown with brush and weeds. It is an unsightly spot, in ugly contrast to the well-kept velvety lawns surrounding it. No money was ever appropriated for its upkeep so we are not permitted to do any work there. Times without number we have endeavored to locate some living relative, but always without success.

In going over the records, yellow with age, I discovered that the last body was placed there in 1854. According to accounts I gathered from the newspaper files of that time, the owners of this vault seem to have been a very wealthy family of recluses. They rarely left their residence and little was known of them.

The neighbors must have been somewhat afraid of them, for they told stories of mysterious rites that took place within this house after dark. Some of the more daring had even peeped through the windows and fled—too terrified to ever repeat what they had seen. There was a vague rumor that huge cats were used in these rites, but beyond that the shroud of mystery has never been penetrated.

IN the early part of August the three boys I had hired became curious about that vault and entered it. They did it on the sly, without my knowledge. Had I known of it I would have discharged them immediately for such desecration. I have the word of Archie Alexander, one of the trio, and the only survivor, for what happened afterward.

One noon hour when they were sure I was home for lunch the three boys stole away from the rest of the men and made their way to the ancient vault. They descended to the door and gave it a light push. The rusty nails gave way and they entered.

The floor was covered with mud that had seeped in. On the left, resting on iron crosspieces, were three wooden coffins, one



above the other. On the right were two wooden coffins and below them a steel torpedo-shaped casket, hermetically sealed, with a glass over the upper half. This casket was covered with a thick coating of rust.

The wooden coffins were all of that old-fashioned octagonal shape usually seen on poison drug labels. Clarence Brown, one of the boys, reached over to lift the lid of one of them and it crumbled at his touch. To the eye they appeared solid and firm, but a dry rot had set in so that not much more than a coat of paint held them together.

The youths stood there, silent and awed, glancing around this dank, gloomy place. Suddenly an icy cold breeze that seemed to originate from nowhere struck their cheeks and seemed to stop. Although it was blistering hot outside, Archie said this draft of air made him feel as though someone had touched him with a piece of ice. The others felt it also and all of them seemed to sense another presence with them in that place.

Clarence uttered a sharp cry and looked at his fingers. He told Archie he thought he had been scratched, but when

with the DEAD



The Thing beckoned more urgently

PAGE
THIRTY

questioned them a number of times during the afternoon but received only a scared look and a shudder in reply. According to the men, the fear that possessed the boys was so genuine that it made kidding them impossible.

They were silent and appeared in a daze when they boarded the street-car after work that night.

The next morning as I walked into the cemetery where the men were sitting around waiting to go to work I noticed Archie with his head in his hands, apart from the rest. I glanced around and saw that Jimmy and Clarence were missing. I walked over to Archie, intending to ask where they were.

I got a terrible shock when he lifted his head at my approach. His eyes were bloodshot and the lids so distended that the white showed clear around the pupil. His face had deep drawn lines and his mouth was agape. I guessed instantly that he hadn't slept during the night.

"Where are the rest of the boys?" I asked.

With an effort he struggled out of the coma he was in and stared dully at me a moment. Then, ignoring my question entirely, he said in a hoarse whisper:

"Mr. Rhodes, can I speak to you alone for a few minutes?"

"Yes, surely you may. Come on down to the office," I replied.

WE walked to the building in silence. When he was seated in a chair facing my desk Archie stared around the room dazedly, as if he didn't know where to start. Finally, in an awed voice that was half a whisper, he began:

"Mr. Rhodes, I'm almost afraid to tell you this. Don't think that I'm crazy, even if it sounds crazy. I don't know what's become of Clarence and Jimmy. I know it's something horrible—something unearthly—and I'm afraid for them. My nerves are in shreds and I feel every minute that I'll go insane. I must confess that we did something we shouldn't have and we did it without your knowledge. We—oh, God!—it's too horrible to tell!"

Here he buried his face in his hands with a cry. "Pull yourself together, Archie, and tell me what is wrong. I haven't much time to spare, so quiet down and get this off your chest," I told him.

With the greatest difficulty he proceeded to recount the adventure of the previous day and part of the horrible experience he and his chums had gone through down in that ancient tomb. . . .

All three of us were deeply affected and unnerved by what we had seen at noon, (he said), and when we got to the boarding house last night, none of us was in the mood for

he looked, all he saw was crumbling bits of wood adhering to the thumb

and finger that had touched the coffin lid. Thinking that he might have been stung by some insect embedded in the wood, Clarence brushed his hands off. Every bit of that little pinch of rotted wood turned to dust that took on a wreathlike shape and floated upward and out of the door. It was uncanny and startled the boys horribly.

Then something happened. I have never been able to learn what it was. The same mysterious terror that had sealed the lips of the peepers two or three generations back, effectively closed Archie's mouth. Countless others besides myself have tried in various ways to get Archie to reveal what he saw; but he never would. His eyes would take on a look of dumb horror and he would slowly shake his head whenever we questioned him. All we learned was that there came a shrill whistle, accompanied by a vile dank odor that might have come from the lower regions. Beyond that, what took place was so horrifying that the secret will die with Archie.

With a wild shriek the boys dashed from the place. The look of sheer horror on their faces actually scared the other men when they got back. They said nothing, however, although the men noticed they kept darting apprehensive glances toward the old vault.

That afternoon they went about their work as though in a trance. It seemed as if they couldn't shake off the haunting fear that weighed on their minds. The others

supper. Clarence and I went immediately to our room and retired without saying a word to each other. Jimmy's room was two doors away from ours and he had gone on ahead of us. We didn't seem to have any desire to talk. The horrors we had passed through that day occupied our minds to the exclusion of all else.

I fell into a troubled sleep and it seemed I had just closed my eyes when I found myself sitting up in bed. I know I was still asleep, although my eyes were open. They felt like round balls of fire in my head.

Then I noticed that Clarence was dressing. He glanced in my direction a number of times but there was no recognition in his eyes. His face was set and his eyes staring like those of a sleep-walker. His lips moved occasionally but no sound came. I had no desire to ask him where he was going or what he was doing up at that hour.

And then, as though drawn by some magnetic pull, I turned to the right—and there, near the door, stood the figure of a man! The most astonishing thing about him was that I could see the door and the flowered patterns of the wallpaper right through his body. Somehow it didn't seem so unusual at the time.

This figure was beckoning impatiently to Clarence who seemed to be hurrying against his will. The stranger glanced at me occasionally in a sort of disinterested way but paid no other attention to me. This gave me an opportunity to study him.

He was dressed in a knee-length frock coat and had tight-fitting trousers strapped under his pointed shoes. On his head was a high fuzzy beaver hat. He might have stepped out of some old portrait of Civil War days.

Then I turned back to watch Clarence. He would halt at times in his dressing as if determined not to go any farther. Then he would shoot apprehensive glances at the figure and appear to be frightened into obedience. He was in mortal terror of this Thing, yet powerless to resist it—as if he were under a strange hypnotic spell. It was awful!

When he had finished dressing he stood up. Then, with eyes focused on this strange figure, he started to follow it in stiff, jerky steps right out the door. I could see that he was going unwillingly and the veins stood out on his temples as he fought and strained against this awful power.

I was unable to say a word or move a muscle. I just sat there trying and trying to close my eyes and gain control of myself again. I felt like someone in a horrible nightmare who is trying to awaken from it but can't. I seemed to be still in a dream, although my eyes were open. Then I tried to force myself back to the pillow to sleep some more but I couldn't. . . .

I don't know how much time had elapsed after Clarence followed that Thing out of the room, when I again felt an irresistible pull from the right near the door. Looking over there I saw the specter once more coming through the closed door. Strangely enough, I wondered in sudden alarm what he had done with Clarence. He seemed to float toward the middle of the room smiling at me all the while.

Then the Thing began to motion to me as it had to Clarence. Its mouth was working as though telling me to dress and follow it: There was no vocal sound, however. It seemed as though impressions telling me just what to do were registered directly on my brain. I sat there in a frightened stupor and gaped at him. I was too numb with fear to move.

Then his gestures became more vehement and the smile that had seemed like a benediction at first became a sardonic smirk. It seemed to say: "You're going to get yours next

so you might just as well make up your mind to come along peacefully."

I tried shutting my eyes, to blot out the vision. Then I shook my head, hoping in that way to clear my brain. I covered my face with my hands—I tried everything I could think of to dispel this awful specter; but every time I'd look up again, there it was!

Then, as if compelling waves too strong to resist flowed into my body, I got out of bed and began dressing. During this operation my soul writhed in terror. A heavy, oppressive sense of something horrifying about to happen to me took hold of every nerve and fiber of my body. But I was powerless to resist. . . .

When I had finished dressing, the specter, still beckoning, floated ahead of me toward the door. Right through the closed door it drifted and I could see it even then, through the door, outside in the hall—still beckoning.

Right there I strained every nerve to fight off this compelling power but gave up, helpless and weak. Smiling significantly, the specter hovered a few feet ahead of me. Down the stairs I followed it.

AS I passed the door to the living room I heard the radio playing. I didn't look in, yet I knew it was Eddie Hanson, another roomer, enjoying himself in there. I don't know how I knew who it was—but I did.

He called to me as I passed, but try as I would, I was unable to answer him or turn my head in his direction. The specter began motioning furiously at the sound of Eddie's voice and I felt it, stronger than before, urging me to come on.

Eddie appeared in the doorway behind me and called again. Oh, how I tried to answer him, to turn toward him! I fought and strained and clenched my teeth until I was almost exhausted from trying. Beads of perspiration rolled down my cheeks like tears. But I had to follow that specter. I couldn't resist its terrible power.

Just as my fingers were closing over the doorknob Eddie yelled piercingly: "Archie!"

Like a knife that cry penetrated my brain and I looked around with renewed effort. Eddie came toward me with a bewildered look on his face.

"What in heck's the matter with you fellows this evening? Gee, but you're all getting stuck up all of a sudden. First Jimmy, then Clarence and now you—" He stopped when he saw the look on my face. Then he cried, "Good Heavens, man! What's the matter? Have you seen a ghost?"

I nodded my head weakly but couldn't use my voice because the spell was coming back with increasing force. Although my back was turned, I could see that hideous specter coming toward me and motioning frantically. Then it came

right around in front of me—between Eddie and myself. Its face, not over four inches from mine, was making horrible grimaces and appeared livid with rage as it tried to compel me to come on.

Everything else was blotted from my sight but that face, and I was just turning to go with it again when Eddie gave me a terrific tug and jerked me into the living room. Then some unseen power lifted me up and hurled me into a corner near the piano.

"Archie!—Archie! Are you walking in your sleep or are you going crazy or what is the matter with you?" cried Eddie. "Tell me, Archie, what's wrong! What's the matter?"

He must have thought I'd thrown a fit or something. "Eddie," I answered faintly. (Continued on page 90)

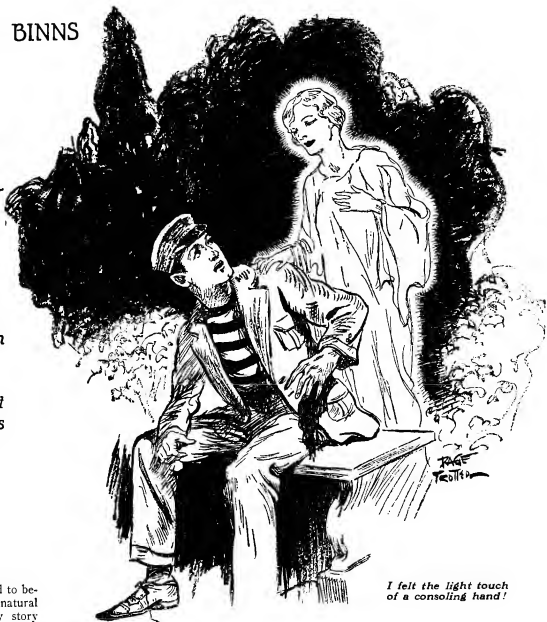


Garden of Enchantment

By ARCHIE BINNS

*Anything might
happen to a
sailor on shore-
leave—but to
this seaman
came
the strangest
experience
of all!*

*Did some unseen
power guide
him back
through the mist
of years—to his
lost love and
his vanished
youth?*



*I felt the light touch
of a consoling hand!*

YOU are not asked to believe the supernatural things which my story suggests. I myself do not know what to think.

I merely wish to tell what happened and let it go at that. It began, in a way, with the one-eyed Greek fruit seller. It would have been better for me if I had never entered that fellow's shop, yet I would give all I have to find him again.

As usual with me when ashore, I had been drinking that evening in San Francisco, but I was *not* drunk. The bosun was with me and we were going back to the ship, steering by instinct through a fog so thick that we could not read the street signs.

We were somewhere east of Market Street, near Embarcadero, when we came abeam of a small fruit store and I was seized with a desire to buy something. Telling my companion to wait, I went into the little shop and looked around. The proprietor, a villainous-looking Greek with a long mustache, leered at me derisively out of his one eye while I regarded the usual display of oranges, fresh figs, dates, bananas, nectarines, and the like. None of these appealed to me, however, and the insolent staring of the Greek was beginning to make me sore.

"Haven't you anything worth buying?" I demanded, ready

to go out. I don't know to this day what made me ask that.

Looking at me craftily, the fellow ducked under a counter and came up with a small woven basket holding half a dozen enormous apples, almost the color of gold. Their appearance was unusual enough, but the fragrance of the fruit was positively startling. In a moment the little shop was filled with their perfume, and I knew immediately that the apples were just the thing I wanted.

"Those will do," I said carelessly. "Wrap them up, lively! I want to get back to the ship tonight."

"**N**OT so fast, not so fast!" returned the fruit seller. "You want to know if I have anything worth buying. These are worth buying, eh? But not for sale."

"Wrap them up," I repeated sternly, "and tell me what you want for them."

The Greek shook his head stubbornly. "These are not for sale."

"Apples sell for five cents apiece," I observed, taking out my wallet. "I'll give you ten."

The man laughed in my face as if I'd been joking. "You do not know what you are trying to buy," he told me. "I would not sell one of these apples for five dollars." "Wrap them up, you robber!" I shouted. "I'll give you a dollar for the lot."

In the end he wrapped them up carefully, with much muttering and head shaking, and gave them to me in exchange for all the money I had—seven dollars. Then I rejoined the bosun and we started on again toward the piers. When we had gone a few blocks, my companion asked me what it was that had kept me so long in the fruit shop.

"Six apples," I told him. "They cost me seven dollars."

"Seven dollars!" My shipmate stopped as if he had been shot. "Seven dollars! You've been robbed. We'll go back and wreck his place if he won't give you your money."

AFTER some useless protest on my part, we started to retrace our steps. Oddly enough, we could not find a sign of the shop, although we wandered about for blocks. But then, the fog was very thick, and the hour was late; no doubt the Greek had closed for the night. At last we gave it up and almost felt our way back to the ship.

By the following morning I had forgotten all about the apples and the Greek. I did not think of them again until evening, when I was going ashore and happened to see the package.

"Apples at over a dollar apiece shouldn't go to waste," I said to myself. So I undid the parcel and took out one of the heavy golden fruit. The others I placed in my locker.

This time I was going ashore alone, and as I walked along Embarcadero I bit into my expensive fruit. At the price, I half expected the apple to be superior to any I had ever eaten before. Instead, there was something almost startlingly familiar about its taste, as well as its smell.

Somewhere, sometime, I had eaten apples that might have come from the same tree. But where, and when? It seemed to me that the gray, clinging fog all about was crowded with scenes and faces from the past. If it would only lift for a moment!

After a while, when I had eaten more of my apple, my mind became very clear. I remembered vividly some things that had been almost obliterated from my thoughts.

Ten years before, right in this very city, I had been engaged to Jean Saint Pierre; she was a part of the past I had almost succeeded in forgetting. In those days I was a young sailor, with ambitions to become an officer and then a captain, and I was saving to get married. Jean and her mother, the widow of a sea captain, owned a little house somewhere on the hill off Sacramento Street, and they rented one floor to another family. Although they had a hard time making ends meet, their home had a kind of charm about it that I have never found anywhere else. That snug little house always seemed like Paradise to me when I returned from long voyages and settled myself before the fireplace between my sweetheart and her quiet, merry little mother. . . .

I remembered the neat, tiny garden at the back of their house, where we sometimes had tea on warm evenings. The garden and the apple tree. . . .

Ah, now I had it—the apple tree! That was the link across the years. Long before, Captain Saint Pierre had brought a little tree from somewhere in the Greek islands and planted it in the garden. Fancifully, perhaps, he had named it the Apple of Hesperides. It had produced just such golden fruit as the one I was eating.

As I walked on in the fog, it suddenly seemed that Jean was very near to me, and I realized anew how much I had loved her, and how beautiful she had been. Seventeen, small and graceful, with a faintly olive complexion, great, tender dark eyes, a sensitive little face—and such a mind of her own!

We had quarreled over some trifle and I had gone away. That trip, the *Gray Cloud* was lost in the quicksands at the mouth of the Hoogli River, near Calcutta. I signed on an-

other ship, bound through Panama for Europe. Then the War came, crowding out memories and regrets, until I had all but forgotten the only real home and true happiness I had ever known.

What a fool I had been! I would find Jean that very night and ask for forgiveness. I could not remember the number of the house, or even the name of the street, but if the house were still standing I would find it, even in the fog!

No sooner had I started on the once familiar way than I was obsessed by fear that the house might have been torn down or that I might not recognize it. But I found the street by instinct, and in another minute the house loomed up suddenly before me in the fog, not a feature of it changed.

But somehow the place seemed empty and forbidding, and I hesitated to mount the steps and ring the bell. In my heart I was afraid that Jean and her mother no longer lived there—that something had happened to them. Like a thief I slunk around the house, to the garden at the rear. It was dark there, but I managed to find the bench where Jean and I had often sat, and I sank down upon it, overwhelmed by memories. Sobs shook my body.

Then, suddenly, I felt the light touch of a consoling hand—and I turned to look into the face of Jean! The next instant she was in my arms. It happened so swiftly that it was like something unreal, in a dream.

"I knew you would come back!" she whispered.

"Yes, Jean," I said, kissing her, "I have come back."

Then she took me by the hand and led me into the house. The only light in the living room came from a wood fire in the fireplace, but the room did not seem changed in the least. Neither did Mrs. Saint Pierre, who greeted me warmly, but quietly, as if she had expected me that very evening. Jean herself did not seem a day older than she had been ten years before.

Just as I had done many times before, I sat before the fire between the two, with Jean's hand in mine. Now that I was back, all the things I had intended to say were forgotten. I had found my sweetheart once more and nothing else seemed to matter. So, in silence, I pressed Jean's hand and gazed into the glowing fire, while a wave of contentment swept over me. Presently it seemed as if ten years had not gone by at all, and as if I had not changed either.

It was Jean's mother who finally broke the happy silence.

"Tell us," she said at last, "where you have been and what new countries you have visited. We want to hear all your adventures, you know."

"Yes," Jean agreed softly, "we stay here in one place, while you travel about the world. You must tell us what you have seen, and what is going on."

SO I began telling them of all the different ports I had visited since I had seen them last. But somehow my travels seemed unreal and unimportant.

"I don't know why," I remarked at length, "but I can't seem to yawn at all tonight. I'm too happy to be here; nothing else matters."

"Perhaps the next time you'll tell us more," Mrs. Saint Pierre suggested. "How long will your ship be in port?"

"About a week," I answered, and the next moment I felt a warm tear on the hand Jean was holding.

"But that doesn't mean I'm sailing then," I hastened to add. "How could I, when I've just found you again, after so many years?"

The girl opened her lips as if to speak; then seemed to change her mind. So we sat silent a while longer about the fire.

"Tell me," I said presently, "is the Apple of Hesperides still growing in the garden?"

Jean and her mother exchanged a swift look which I could not understand.

"Yes, Jack," the mother answered gently after a minute, "the tree is growing well."

I had been on the point of telling my story of the apples and the one-eyed Greek, but that look between the two decided me against it. Somehow, I had a feeling that the subject would embarrass them, though I couldn't imagine why it should. Nevertheless, I changed the subject after that, and we talked quietly of things other than the past, or the years that were to come, or the Apple of Hesperides—topics, it seemed, that I might not touch upon.

After a while the mother glanced at the ship's bell on the mantel-piece.

"Why, it's past one o'clock!" she exclaimed. "You must go now, Jack, or you'll never find your way back to the ship!"

The words brought me to with a start, for I had not been conscious of the passing of time, and I had no wish to leave just yet.

Jean clung tightly to my hand, and I thought she was going to suggest that I stay a little longer. But instead she told me softly, "Yes, you must go now, dear, or it will be morning before you can get back to the ship."

IT did not matter to me when I got back, but her tone was so troubled and urgent that I rose at once and said good night to Mrs. Saint Pierre. Still holding my hand, Jean went with me to the door. In the half-lighted hall I caught a glimpse of my own face in the dim old mirror. Perhaps it was because of the semi-darkness, but it seemed that the reflection I saw for a moment was the boyish face of the young sailor I had been ten years before.

"Jean," I said, as I held the girl in my arms, "may I come back tomorrow evening, please?"

She was looking up at me with wistful, half-bewildered eyes, yet I had the feeling that she understood things which I did not, and which she could not tell me.

"When you come back we will be here, waiting for you," she answered softly. "You must hurry now, please, or you will be lost in the fog!"

I opened the door and went out quickly. There was reason for Jean's uneasiness, for the fog was the worst I had ever known. Once I turned to look back, but there was nothing to see. The very house had been swallowed up in the gray, impenetrable masses of driving mist.

After walking for about five minutes I was lost. I was wet, too, and chilled with the clinging fog. The street was

utterly deserted, and nothing short of a step-ladder and a flashlight would have enabled me to read the corner signs. Once I felt my way up a flight of steps to someone's porch, intending to ask directions, but when I found the bell it did not ring. I knocked and waited a while, and then knocked again, more vigorously. My only answer was a queer, hollow echo from within. It finally dawned on me that the house was vacant.

Blundering on a while longer, I tried door after door, with the same result, until it seemed that I was alone in a deserted city. My nerves were on edge. I tried to calm myself by supposing that I had stumbled upon a row of new houses that were still unoccupied, but it did not help. I finally gave up and staggered aimlessly on.

Ordinarily I am credited with a fairly good sense of direction, but this time it left me in the lurch. I hadn't the slightest idea where I was, but this I did know: I was miserably cold and wet, and I was stumbling on entirely unfamiliar ground



"Look at him!" they shrieked. "How did HE get here? He's not—"

with no way of getting my bearings. I felt oddly helpless.

When I had been wandering about for perhaps an hour, the reassuring bulk of several cable cars loomed up suddenly ahead of me. They were deserted for the time being because the dense fog made their operation dangerous. Well, I reflected, I could at least follow the tracks, for they led downhill, out of the infernal maze in which I had been groping.

Fifteen minutes later I found myself on Market Street, and it seemed incredible that I had been lost at all. Yet it was three o'clock; I had been beating about in the fog for nearly

two hours. But it was more than worth it, to have found my little Jean, almost by a miracle, after all those years!

I was hardly safe on board ship before I was wishing for evening, instead of the dawn which was just breaking. For all my impatience, however, the evening did finally come, and I shaved and dressed with utmost care. As I opened my locker to get my hat, the fragrance of the costly apples struck my nostrils pleasantly, and I took one to eat on the way. As I passed the bosun he gave me a queer look. I figured he hadn't gotten over the price I paid for those apples.

Out on the street the fog still lingered, and after having been so completely lost the night before, I wondered if I should be able to find Jean's house again. Presently, though, I began to feel very sure of myself and smiled at my fears. Hardly had I finished nibbling the apple when I found myself in the well-remembered street, and a minute later I was at the door of the little house, sounding four notes on the bell.

The next instant the door was thrown open and Jean was in my arms.

"I'm so glad you are here," she murmured. "I was dreadfully afraid you might get lost!"

"I DID get lost last night," I told her. "The fog was terrible and I wandered round until nearly morning."

The girl seemed actually frightened by my words.

"You must be careful next time," she said, clinging to me, "oh, so careful! Something might happen, and you would be caught between the—" She broke off, as if she had said too much.

"Between what?" I asked, puzzled.

"Between here and the ship," she answered quickly, slipping her cool little hand into mine. "Come in by the fire; mother is expecting you."

That evening passed like the first, except that I had a still greater feeling of certainty and contentment. I knew in my heart that when sailing day came, my ship would leave without me. So I let myself dream, gazing into the cheery fire. It was so comforting, just to be there, that words did not seem important.

I came to myself with a start when the mother said gently: "It's one o'clock, my lad; time for you to be starting back."

As on the other evening, I hesitated but Jean caught my hands in hers and pulled me to my feet. There was nothing for it, but to say good night. Jean led me into the hall. This time I deliberately looked into the dim old mirror. Strange how the trick persisted; I could have sworn that the reflection I saw was my face as it had been ten years before!

Jean caught my glance and looked up at me with a wistful little smile, her lips half-parted, as if she were on the point of telling me something. Suddenly she threw her arms about my neck.

"Good night," she said quickly. "Hurry now, and don't get lost! I'll be waiting when you come back."

Another moment, and I was in the foggy street. This time, however, I had better luck and did not get lost. I must have gone somewhat out of my way, though, for it was almost two o'clock when I reached Market Street.

The next evening I was more impatient than ever to get back to Jean. The fog was no worse than it had been on the previous night, but for some reason I had more trouble finding my way. It was nearly an hour before I came to the street, and then, where I should have found the Saint Pierre's house, I bumped into an ugly yellow apartment building. What rotten luck! I must have taken a wrong turn somewhere—although, except for that yellow eyesore, the street I was on was a dead ringer for the one I was looking for.

By this time the fog had settled even lower and obscured everything. Again I lost my way completely. I wandered about, confused and troubled. When at last I stumbled upon the street-car tracks, I considered myself lucky to know the way back to my ship, and gave up the search for Jean that night; next time I would be more cautious.

That one lost evening made the following day seem longer

than ever. I could hardly endure the last half of the afternoon, and later I slipped out of the mess room without a bite, just to make the evening longer. I dressed carefully, telling myself that this evening I was going to write the Saint Pierre's address in my notebook. No more aimless meandering in the San Francisco fog. As I was leaving I slipped one of the golden apples into my pocket; it might come in handy on a supperless evening.

Oddly enough, my feet seemed to find the way without any difficulty, despite the lingering mist. Presently I was bounding up the steps of the little porch, two at a time, my hand ready to ring the bell. It was then I realized that I had already finished my apple. Strange, that I should have eaten an apple without knowing it!

At the door Jean welcomed me with her usual warmth, saying not a word about my absence the previous evening. In fact, I got the impression that neither she nor her mother wished to speak of it. Nevertheless, the evening passed as swiftly and happily as the preceding ones, and before I knew it, the clock had chimed one, and Jean was leading me toward the door. She kissed me good night and urged me to hurry back to the ship. Hearing her gentle insistence, one would have thought that my life depended upon my getting there.

I came again the two succeeding evenings, always so impatient to get there that I came to rely on my apples in lieu of dinner. Each night the short happy hours slipped by all too soon in the golden firelight; and then the inevitable one o'clock would come and I'd be told to go.

It seemed all right at the time, but during the day I was troubled. What was it Jean wished to tell me, and why did she check herself each time, as if there were some reason why she should not speak? And why weren't we making any plans? I was sure Jean still loved me, and I had already decided to give up the sea and settle down to a job ashore. But I was never given an opportunity to unfold my plans. It was baffling.

There was something else, too—the way Jean and her mother ignored my ten-year absence, and avoided all mention of the future. It was odd, too, that they had not changed one bit in all those years. How did they do it? It occurred to me that they were like people living in a picture, where there is no past or future, and no such thing as time. I wondered if they had been like that before I went away; I couldn't remember ever having noticed it. Still, I had been very young then.

ON the day of my sixth visit, I made up my mind to come to some kind of understanding that night. Jean had become dearer to me than she had ever been before. I loved her to the exclusion of everything else. So far as I could see, there was no reason why we should not be married as soon as I could find suitable work ashore.

That evening, as I hurried along, munching the last of my six golden apples, the years ahead seemed particularly bright; now that I had made up my mind, my earlier doubts were set at rest.

We were all sitting before the fire, as usual, when I broached the forbidden subject of the future.

"Mom," I said to Mrs. Saint Pierre, "I'm getting tired of knocking about the seven seas. I want to marry and settle down. This house is the only place where I have ever known anything like happiness. Won't you consider taking me into the family?"

Jean gave my hand a warning squeeze, which I pretended not to notice. Turning to her, I said: "We agreed on it long ago, didn't we, Jean? You haven't changed your mind, have you?"

Her only answer was to hold my hand more tightly.

Turning to the mother again, I added coaxingly: "What about it, Mom? I'll work hard and take good care of Jean."

Mrs. Saint Pierre's only answer was a sad unfathomable smile that made me feel, somehow, like a child asking for a toy which his mother is obliged to refuse him. I had been

prepared for arguments, for almost anything, but that compassionate smile was too much for me and I dropped the subject to talk of other things.

"Past one o'clock," the mother said presently. "You must go now, Jack."

I had less desire than ever to leave.

"Why must I go?" I protested. "Can't I stay a little longer?"

Again Mrs. Saint Pierre smiled indulgently, and a little sadly.

"It wouldn't be safe for you," she said, as if that settled the matter. It did not, so far as I was concerned. But Jean was already leading me toward the hall, and the hand that held mine was trembling, as if the girl feared some catastrophe.

"Jean!" I cried, drawing her into my arms, "you love me, don't you?"

"You know I do!" she replied quickly, burying her head against my shoulder. "I'll love you, always."

"Why can't we be married, then?" I demanded. "Why do we have to put it off? Why are there things that we must not talk about? There's something strange about this house and—"

"DON'T, don't say it!" the girl whispered, her eyes wide with fright. "There are things you can't understand now—questions you mustn't ask—something terrible might happen if I told you. Some day you will understand, but you can't now. Don't ask me, please!"

"Will you tell me the next time I come?" I asked hopefully.

"Don't make me promise," the girl pleaded, putting her hands up to my face. "Some day you'll come back and all at once you will understand. It won't even be necessary for me to tell you, then, and you'll see how simple it all is." The tender, pleading look in her eyes changed to one of alarm. "Please go now," she begged. "Quick, before it's too late!"

Her hand was already on the door knob.

"Why will it be too late?" I asked, stopping her.

"Daylight might come before you found your way back," she answered breathlessly. "If it did, you would never, never be—" She broke off abruptly and opened the door, letting in some of the chill fog. "Oh, I told you not to ask questions! Go now, quickly, if you love me."

"May I come tomorrow evening?" I asked as calmly as I could.

"Whenever you come, I will be waiting for you," she answered. "Only hurry, please!"

When I reached the sidewalk I turned once to look back. Jean was still standing in the doorway; she looked so small and wistful and far away, like a child in an old picture. I waved to her and she started to raise her hand. Just then a cloud of thick fog came drifting down between us—and the girl and the porch and the house were blotted out as if they had never been.

It was not the first time I had observed the tricks of a San Francisco fog. But the Saint Pierre house had become a place of mystery to me, and I knew a chill, sinking feeling as I tried to make my way back to the ship.

Why should Jean and her mother have to be so mysterious? What was it they could not tell me, but that I would find out for myself? Jean had said it would all be so simple, then. . . . Well, it didn't seem simple now! The most I could make of it was that they were under the power of some kind of tyrant, and were afraid that if I found out, I would do something rash and bring calamity on myself, without being able to help them.

For all that, though, I was determined to see the matter through and let them understand that I wasn't the impulsive, inexperienced boy they had known ten years earlier. Then I remembered the fresh, youthful face I had seen reflected in the old mirror. That was something I could not explain

any more than the fact that Jean and her mother had apparently not aged a day in ten years. Was it possible that they had learned the secret of turning time back? But what about me? The problem became more and more involved. The answer lay somewhere in the Saint Pierre house, and I was resolved to stay in San Francisco until I learned the truth.

Having arrived at that decision, I looked about to get my bearings. But no sooner did I give my attention to my immediate surroundings than I realized that I was lost. Instinct told me that I should already be going down the hill toward Market Street, yet my feet told me that I was walking on level ground. I swirled ahead through the fog five minutes more, then ten—and still no hill. I hadn't known there was that much level space in all the city.

Chilled and wet, I hurried on. If only I might meet someone of whom I could ask directions—but in all the time I had been walking, I had not seen one living soul. I might have been wandering in an empty world of mist and darkness. Then I recalled that I had never met anyone on the previous occasions when I had been lost. And those empty houses at whose doors I had knocked? What about them? It made me shudder!

When I had about decided that the Saint Pierre house was no stranger than the neighborhood surrounding it, I was reassured by the sound of voices—good, rough, seamen's voices at that.

"Quartermaster," one of them boomed out, "you take the wheel. I can't tell where we're steering in this damned fog!"

"Neither can I, without a compass," the quartermaster answered.

"Why do we want to go anywhere?" another voice put in. "This is as good a port as any, if we can find a place to get dry and have a drink!"

Other voices bawled approval of the idea, and suddenly the sailors loomed up close before me in the fog.

"Aho, there!" I shouted when the shadowy figures were almost upon me. "Do you know any way of getting out of this place?"

"Not much!" answered the one with the booming voice. "We've been trying all—"

"Our luck!" another interrupted him. "Nearly foundered on a rotten voyage, and we no sooner make port and get ashore, than we get tangled up with this bloomin' fog!"

"You'll never get out of here," one of them assured me in a creepy voice. "Come on with us and we'll find something to drink."

CHILLED and depressed as I was, and weary with my fruitless wandering, I felt inclined to accept the friendly offer. After all, what did it matter where I went? I was going to leave the ship, anyway. Then, all of a sudden, Jean seemed to be somewhere near me, and her pleading voice echoed in my ears: "Go back quickly, if you love me!"

That decided me.

"Sorry," I said, "but I have to get back to my ship."

"You'll never get out of here," one of them assured me, while the other misty shapes crowded about, urging me to come along. Suddenly several of the nondescript crew came very close and stared at me, then drew back in terror.

"Look at him!" they shrieked. "How did *he* get here? He's not—"

"Look out, look out!" cried a husky voice.

Another second, and they were gone—a confused clamor of thudding feet and terrified cries receding through the fog. What now? I wondered. Could they have taken me for a ghost?

Shortly afterward I found the cable car line and made my way back to the ship, arriving there a little before dawn, pretty well exhausted.

The next evening found me more eager than ever to resume my strange adventure. The wretched fog that had been smothering the city for a week was almost gone, and

stars were beginning to appear as I started out along the Embarcadero.

For some reason, though, I didn't feel as sure of myself as I had on the preceding evenings. Perhaps I missed the flavor of the golden apples; I had grown so accustomed to munching one on my way. But they were gone, and I didn't know where to get others like them.

DESPITE my misgivings, however, I found the street easily enough, and hurried along the remaining block. Then my heart sank. Just where the Saint Pierres' house should have been, stood the ugly yellow apartment building which I had bumped into once before. Again I had been tricked! I was on the wrong street after all, though its resemblance to the other was uncanny. I reached for the book into which I had copied the address some evenings earlier—and then I remembered! I had left it on board in my overcoat pocket.

After tramping about for an hour, I gave up and went back to the ship. The following day was Sunday, a holiday for me. I felt sure that daylight would clear up all that had baffled me in the fog and darkness.

The morning was clear and sunny, and I started out with a light heart, not forgetting to take the Saint Pierres' address along. In my eagerness I hailed a taxicab—something I had never done before in my life—and rode in state. Almost before I knew it, we were in the familiar old street, and a moment later the driver pulled up at the curb and opened the door. "Here you are," he said.

Mechanically I stepped out, paid the fare, and turned as the taxi rattled away. What now! Was I going mad? Before me was an ugly yellow brick apartment house, its number the very one in my book. It was the third time that hateful building had confronted me. Yet I was in the right street; I had carefully noted the name as we turned in. Thoroughly dazed, I walked up and down, wondering if I could have taken down the wrong address. The street looked familiar enough—but where was the house?

In the garden of a small neat dwelling next to the yellow building an old gentleman was pulling weeds. As I was about to pass for the fourth time, he stopped work and came to the gate.

"You seem to be looking for something," he remarked pleasantly. "Can I help you?"

As soon as he spoke, I recognized him. In the old days he had been the St. Pierres' next-door neighbor, and had been on the best of terms with them.

"You're just the man who can help me," I declared.

"Where is the Saint Pierres' house? I can't find it."

He pointed toward the ugly yellow building. "It used to be there," he said.

"How is that?" I asked. "Has the house been moved?"

"Why, no," he answered. "It was torn down several years ago to make room for that building."

A chill passed over me at his words, and I felt my hair beginning to rise.

"But—the Saint Pierres—" I stammered. "Where did they move to?"

"Don't you know?" he asked. "Mrs. Saint Pierre and her daughter were killed five years ago in a bus accident."

I was frozen speechless, but the old man didn't seem to notice.

"I was their neighbor," he went on, "and I knew them very well. Jean was the prettiest thing I ever saw. She had fallen in love with a young sailor who used to visit them. Then something happened and he went away. Jean, and her mother, too, always expected him to come back, and they kept everything about the house just as it had been when he used to call; they didn't change much themselves, either." He shook his head slowly. "The sailor never came back, of course."

AT last I found my voice, although I did not ask all the questions I wanted to.

"The apple tree—the one that grew in their garden—" I stammered, "what became of it?"

"The apple tree?" he queried. "Oh, I remember—they called it the Apple of Hesperides! It had to go, too, when the house did."

That is my story.

I have nothing to add, except that I have searched feverishly ever since for the one-eyed Greek and the Apples of Hesperides. I have never found them. But it may be that on some foggy night I shall suddenly stumble on the shop of the mysterious vender and give all I have, if need be, for one of those fabulous fruits that will lead me through the mist and darkness between the worlds to the house of my lost love and my forgotten youth. But when that time comes I shall have come home for good, and I will refuse to go away when morning approaches.

It will be a wonderful experience, though I do not expect to be able to tell anyone the outcome. Probably the most the living will ever know will be that I have vanished from the surface of this earth, or that I have been found dead in some lonely place with a golden apple in my hand.

The Haunted Castle on the Rhine

THE castles on the Rhine, far-famed in song and story, have yet another claim to distinction—their ghosts.

High on a bluff overlooking the span of the river between Cologne and Coblenz, there stand the majestic ruins of a *Schloss* that is said to be haunted. The last record we have of its ghostly visitor dates back some fifty years or more ago, when the place had long been deserted by all save the venerable caretaker, Herman Bruck, and his wife. Frau Bruck had been ill for some time when, at a sudden turn for the worse, her husband called in a physician, Gustav Wenzel.

Upon his arrival at the castle, the doctor was conducted by Bruck to a room on the lower floor and told to wait there until the patient was made ready to see him. The apartment was gloomy, with no breaks in the solid oak walls other than the door, a small window and an opening for a flight of stairs leading to the floor above. As Doctor Wenzel looked about him, fretting at the delay, the outer door opened and a beautiful young woman, handsomely dressed, entered. The physician immediately sprang to his feet and bowed, believing himself in the presence of one of the owners of the castle.

The woman, however, gave no sign of having seen him,

but crossed the room, wringing her hands in great agitation, and then disappeared up the stairs. Wondering at the anguish in her expression and at her wild gestures, the doctor was about to follow her when Bruck returned. Seeing the man's anxiety for his wife, Wenzel did not refer to the strange incident then, but when he came the next day he inquired of the caretaker the identity of the troubled young lady. To his amazement, Bruck broke down and began to sob brokenly that now his wife was surely going to die.

When at last he calmed down, the old man related that the person the doctor had seen was the daughter of a former owner, a girl who had fallen off a cliff to her death when attempting to escape from those who would have punished her for a series of crimes. She had, it seemed, been cruel as well as beautiful and had poisoned many an enemy, capping her career by strangling her own child in order to run away with a lover. This final deed had been committed in the room above. Bruck added, and whenever she appeared there, some misfortune always befell those in the house.

The poor man's forebodings were all too well founded, for despite every effort of the physician, Frau Bruck died that night.

The Bewitched Coffee Pot

By GORDON HILLMAN

Did ghosts invade the parsonage at Hanover, Mass.? Read the TRUE story of a reign of terror unparalleled in the annals of the supernatural

ON the twenty-second of July, 1912, the little Massachusetts town of Hanover drowsed placidly in the summer sun. Hanover is an old historic village situated some thirty miles from Boston, on a main and well-traveled road. It is peopled by hard-headed New England folk, who would look askance at the mere mention of the word "supernatural."

On the twenty-fourth of July, however, Hanover was in a wild uproar. Citizens ran through the streets in alarm; every train brought newspaper men and photographers from Boston; and across the street from the little two-story white rectory, townfolk stood in awed, silent and terrified groups. For Hanover was haunted by one of the strangest and most terrifying ghosts in the annals of supernatural phenomena!

In the parsonage lived the Reverend Father Charles Donohue, and during the daytime his housekeeper, Miss Margaret O'Connell, "tidied things for him," as they say in New England. The dwelling was bright and cheerful, its exterior most commonplace. It was no place for a ghost, yet there the ghost was!

On the preceding Saturday afternoon a group of parishioners had met in the rectory to plan a picnic. Suddenly, in the midst of their conversation, a number of heavy knocks sounded. The parishioners were somewhat startled, though not unduly alarmed. When they looked for the source of the knocks, however, they could find none. So they went on their way, marveling a bit, but never suspecting that the strange noises had ushered in a reign of terror for the whole town.

THAT night, Father Donohue, his housekeeper and a friend, Miss Frances E. Hoban, head operator at the Rockland Telephone Exchange, were in the parlor when they heard another and still more terrifying noise. They traced it to the rear of the house and came upon a staggering sight. A table in the kitchen had been overturned, its stout legs broken by what seemed a superhuman force—yet there was no person besides themselves in the house. The front door was locked; no one could have entered or left, and it would have taken a man of immense strength to have wrecked the kitchen table.

Suddenly, from the front of the house, there came an ear-shattering chorus of blows. The three ran back into the hall. There stood a small cabinet organ and a stool. The organ was intact, but the stool was broken, its screws loosened and thrown about, while one of the iron braces supporting it had been split in two.

Again the noise; once more from the kitchen. This time two glasses of jelly had been hurled about the room, everything was turned upside down and the enameled coffee pot was teetering in a jig across the iron stove.

Father Donohue, considerably affected by what had happened, asked to have a bed made up for him in the garret, instead of in his own room, and thither he retired rather early.

The account of the strange incident which followed is taken from Boston's most conservative newspaper:

"I placed an alarm clock near the head of my bed," said Father Donohue, "and it must have been one o'clock when I was awakened by a terrific crash. The clock flew to one side of the room, striking the wall. I could see it plainly in the moonlight. No one was in the room. No one could have been.

"I arose and picked it up again, placing it at the head of the bed, for it was unbroken and continued to tick. I was unable to go to sleep again and in a short time heard another crash. *The clock had leaped from the head of the bed, down the flight of stairs. It was smashed to pieces.*"

This, it must be remembered, is no fictional account of the strange phenomena. It is cold, precise and unemotional news.

On Sunday, Father Donohue took his parishioners into his confidence.

It seemed that the housekeeper would hear a sudden noise in the kitchen and rush out to find the floor literally covered with water. Yet there was no water in the house; it had to be carried from a well a hundred yards away.

The woman would put the coffee pot on the stove, and it would suddenly rise of its own accord and go flying about the room. It moved at about the height of a man's head, generally in a straight line, and at high speed. No "ghost" was seen, but the coffee pot *did fly*. Father Donohue had seen it, and several of the neighbors were to be terror-stricken by it shortly afterward.

Then there was the matter of the hatrack. It stood in the front hall as a good hatrack should, but frequently, when Miss O'Connell passed it, it would leap in the air as if to assault her. Then it would pass rapidly through the back hall—gliding apparently of its own volition, six inches above the carpet—and come down with a crash.

The reverend gentleman had been violently thrown from bed in the middle of the night and doused with water. No one was in the room. No one could have been in the room at the time—save a most terrifying phenomenon. And that, Father Donohue resolutely refused to mention, believing it to be an hallucination of his overwrought nerves.

A COMMITTEE of twelve highly skeptical parishioners accompanied him home that Sunday night.

"Even," says the newspaper account, "with this guard of men in the house, the manifestations continued. A jardinière in the front hall, where some of the men were seated, danced on its pedestal and smashed to pieces on the floor. A clothes tree standing in the upper hall walked upon its own legs, fell down the front stairs and was broken.

"The committee looked the front hall over, and examined the adjoining rooms, but nothing was revealed. No one could account for the strange happenings.

"The experience was too much for the committee and, taking the occupants of the house with them, they repaired to other quarters, preferring to leave the spirits in complete control of the premises. Late in the evening, passersby alleged that they heard knocking in the house and sounds like the breaking of furniture."

The next day, Father Donohue, (Continued on page 94)



Mrs. Pearl Lenore Curran, of St. Louis, is the amateur medium through whom "Patience Worth" has communicated her marvelous stories and poems

A GHOST

Has an impertinent, red-haired girl come back from Beyond to confound the greatest scientists with her wit, her wisdom and her mockery? Here is a full account of the "Patience Worth" mystery that has baffled the world

OUT of the Unknown came a strange name—Patience Worth—and the sitters stared in amazement at each other. In the years that followed, this name was to become what one university professor has called "the most amazing phenomenon of the age"—a spirit who dictates novels that are accepted as perfect presentations of the times they portray; poems that are hailed as equal to some of the greatest in the English language; and proverbs that are pungent in their wisdom and wit.

Out of the Unknown has come this ghostly flood of literature—through a normal woman living in St. Louis, Missouri, who possesses little or no knowledge of classical literature—utterances that even today are puzzling the great and the learned who seek to solve the greatest psychic puzzle that ever confronted man; who probe, dig and investigate, only to throw up their hands in helpless amazement and say:

"We cannot understand it. No living being of flesh and blood could do what Patience Worth is doing."

On the night of June 8th, 1913, Mrs. Pearl Lenore Curran and her husband were entertaining a group of friends at their home in St. Louis. Among those present were Mrs. Emily G. Hutchings, Mrs. Mary E. Pollard and several neighbors who had dropped in to pass the evening.

The ouija board was the rage at the time. To be sure, no actual messages from the spirit world had ever been received by this means, yet clever manipulators of the board could produce witty responses for the amusement of all those present.

On the night mentioned, Mrs. Curran, a happy, commonplace woman, sat with Mrs. Hutchings at the ouija board while others in the group stood or sat around them, laughing and urging them on.

As the pointer darted from letter to letter, with Mrs. Curran and Mrs. Hutchings holding their fingers lightly on the triangular bit of board, Mrs. Pollard took down the "messages."

Presently these words, spelled in quaint, archaic fashion, came:

*Many moons ago I lived. Again I come—
Patience Worth my name.*

Hearty chuckles greeted this. The sitters kidded each other. Mrs. Curran gently chided Mrs. Hutchings for trying to play a trick on them, while Mrs. Hutchings laughingly made the same charge against Mrs. Curran.

"Patience, where was your home?" asked Mrs. Hutchings. The pointer flitted from letter to letter and spelled out:

Across the sea.

"In what city or country?" Mrs. Hutchings looked slyly at Mrs. Curran, who in turn was looking with amazement at her companion.

About me you would know much. Yesterday is dead. Let thy mind rest as to the past.

Both Mrs. Curran and Mrs. Hutchings took their fingers off the pointer and looked at each other.

It must be explained that the spelling used here is that of modern English, but as the words came on the ouija board they were spelled in quaint English, such as was used some three hundred years ago. Neither of the women was acquainted with ancient English spelling. Instead of further jesting about it, they gave way to wonder and speculation over this phenomenon they could not understand and onto which they had unexpectedly stumbled.

LATER, when the two women and the others had become used to getting these messages, the unknown woman calling herself Patience Worth came regularly to sitting after sitting, spelling out her communications, using phrases and words with which the sitters were not familiar. Sometimes Mrs. Hutchings sat; at other times other women sat; but the messages came only when someone sat with Mrs. Curran.

Friends came to witness these astonishing ghostly communications. The newspapers got hold of the facts, and sent reporters to sit in. The reporters watched and went away puzzled, certain that someone was playing a gigantic trick. But it was a good story anyway. . . .

After a year of such messages, which were taken down and saved by Mrs. Curran's husband, the literary spirit became so well known that her fame had spread from coast to coast. Investigators of psychic phenomena who lived in and

who Dictates NOVELS

By
JOHN L. SPIDAK



Edgar Lee Masters—one of the many famous authors who have admitted that no living writer could do what "Patience Worth" has done

near St. Louis first came to probe and "expose another spirit fraud." They came to scoff but went away bewildered—and they are still bewildered today.

Most of the utterances were phrased poetically, but it was a year or two before this was recognized. The spirit's conversation was keen, witty, brilliant, often illuminated with extraordinary gems of wisdom. Investigators, nevertheless, were inclined to think that these "messages" were merely the utterances of Mrs. Curran, who, by that time, was generally accused of playing a gigantic hoax. And this belief prevailed until the passing years and deep and thorough investigation, coupled with tests that no human being could pass, convinced the scholars otherwise.

ONE day the ouija board, in the presence of several university professors who had come to investigate the phenomenon—professors of psychology, literature, and physiology—as well as newspaper men and investigators for the Boston Society for Psychic Research, spelled out the following poem in free verse:

I LISTENED LAST EVE

*I listened last eve, to the evening's song,
And the music upon which it rested.
I saw two towering cliffs, betwureted
And a gaping golden space between.
And the sun lay like a great glowing globe
Upon the golden sea, and his rays
Created a lyre, stringing in distinct
Golden threading from cliff to cliff.
And the night birds strummed it with their wings
And the sea hummed lazily beyond.*

"Not a bad bit of poetry," said the investigators, "but nevertheless one that a human being could have composed just as well, memorized and then given as a spirit message."

Determined to expose the hoax, they set about definitely to investigate Mrs. Curran's past, to learn whether she had ever shown a tendency to write poetry.

The investigation was undertaken by representatives of the Boston Society for Psychic Research; by professors of psychology, who wanted to find out if it was Mrs. Curran's sub-

conscious mind that was sending these messages and poems; and by newspaper men and authors.

From her earliest days they scrutinized her past. They investigated her ancestors, her parents, her life from the very day she was born. They talked with her teachers, friends and acquaintances, and the facts they uncovered proved conclusively that Mrs. Curran could not possibly be the mysterious author, for her knowledge was scant, especially on the subjects on which she—through Patience Worth—discoursed so fluently.

She had not only never read Seventeenth Century literature and historical works, but it was definitely established that she had never had the opportunity. Neither had she any knowledge of Palestine during Biblical days, except through a casual reading of the Bible. Yet one of the novels that came through Mrs. Curran from Patience Worth, *The Sorry Tale*, a story of the life of Christ, dealt intimately with characters and historical scenes which even professors of history had to investigate—only to find that they were accurately described!

THE investigators established the fact that Mrs. Curran was born in Mound City, Illinois, on February 15, 1883. She had a normal upbringing, had never shown the slightest interest in spiritualism, had never tried to write and had no appreciation or knowledge whatever of great literature.

The professors could not understand it. They were posi-

tive that somewhere in Mrs. Curran's subconscious mind was the secret of all this flood of literature that was coming through the ouija board. They could find nothing, however, that in any way supported this belief.

Years passed. Patience still came regularly, using Mrs. Curran as the medium for her verses and prose. Some evenings as many as a hundred scholars, American and European as well, crowded her home to be present at the dictation of poems and prose. All went away puzzled and bewildered.

As the years rolled by, the ouija board was gradually discarded. Mrs. Curran began to spell out words that "came to her." Later, even this spelling was eliminated and she uttered whole words with great rapidity, often at a rate that left her exhausted, though she never went into a trance or professed mediumship. She never asked for nor received any money from these demonstrations of Patience Worth's literary activities.

When she began to utter words which, she said, Patience Worth placed in her mind, the investigators were jubilant.

"Ah," they said, "now we know that the spirit has nothing to do with these utterances! It is Mrs. Curran herself."

But this still failed to explain Mrs. Curran's phenomenal recital of prose and poetry that was perfect—never needing the slightest revision; it failed to explain her knowledge of words and spelling for whose meaning even expert philologists had to search dusty tomes; it failed to explain the accuracy of her historical knowledge which was entirely beyond the limits of her early education.

Such was the complex situation, when Patience Worth displayed the greatest phenomenon of all her years' dictation!

Many messages began to come, couched in a phrasing and spelling that were used only in certain limited sections of England some three hundred years ago—words which were unknown not only to Mrs. Curran but to the learned scholars who were present—quaint words, quaintly spelled, words of the forgotten long ago.

"Mrs. Curran is merely inventing odd spellings and strange words to puzzle us," said the professors of history and philology, and they called at authorities on Seventeenth Century English for consultation and advice.

And these eminent men found that the words that issued from Mrs. Curran, as the utterances of Patience Worth, were colloquialisms, obsolete for three centuries!

Other words were there, too—words which even the very learned had never heard of, and the philologists dug deeper and deeper, only to find to their speechless amazement that the words had actually existed!

Mrs. Curran could not possibly have ever heard about them!

AS the mystery of Patience Worth only became deeper as each scholar confessed himself baffled, investigators set themselves to establish definitely whether anyone named Patience Worth had ever lived about 1649, the year the spirit gave as that of her birth. Patience herself seldom referred to definite places or dates connected with her former existence, showing utter disregard for things past, and stating frequently that earthly measurements of time were of no interest to her.

From phrases dropped during the spirit's conversation, however, it was learned that she was born in England about 1649 and had lived there, a lively red-haired lass, full of life and fun, until she grew to womanhood. She spent all of her time working in the fields and about the house. In her twenties she migrated to America. Not long after arriving here she was killed during an attack by Indians, which, it was established, must have been during King Philip's war.

One investigator tried to trap her. He asked if the name of the Indian who killed her was Philip.

To which Patience retorted somewhat contemptuously, and with her casual caustic wit: *If someone had a sword at your throat, would you stop to ask your assailant's name?*

Men were sent to England to check up on descriptions of Patience Worth's native country, which she claimed was Dorsetshire, and to search for landmarks which she had mentioned as existing there. Many of the landmarks she had referred to tallied exactly with her descriptions. Other landmarks did not exist when the inquirers arrived but an exhaustive search of local records and historical data established the fact that they had existed about the year 1650. In addition, many of the archaic words used by Patience, and which had not been traced to any definite source, were found to have been colloquialisms used in Dorsetshire about the time of 1650!

While these investigations were being conducted, Patience continued to dictate poems, interspersing them with bits of sparkling conversation.

NATURALLY she was asked many questions about future life, religion and kindred subjects, with which spirits are supposed to be familiar. Patience showed a complete disregard for all that earthly beings are interested in spiritually. Especially was she ready with shrewd and biting remarks about the church and its ministers. Nevertheless, throughout most of her utterances, whenever God or Christ was mentioned, she showed a deep-rooted piety.

Once, when she was asked to tell something of her early days, she dictated:

Well I remember a certain church, with its wee windows and its prim walls, with its sanctity and its meekness, with its aloofness and chilling godliness.

The good man (the minister) denounced sin and fearsome faultings, but lawk! he squinted a whit! I had a silver buckle on my boot, and no man knew it save the good man. He looked soberly, and with the soberness he turned upon the Word, at the buckle. Aye, and thy handmaid sent him a wee upward look. Aye, and he rubbed his chin and coughed mightily and spat! And when the next Sabbath came he raged mightily against buckles. And hark—he looked to find the buckle after the Word. It was there, and lawk! I curtsied that he should see it not.

This sample of humor was delightful and the sitters chuckled heartily.

Patience frequently—and this, too, puzzled the investigators—interspersed such sprightly morsels among her more serious dictations of poems and novels.

After this bright description of the poor good man who had difficulty concentrating his attention upon the Word while a red-haired maid cast upward looks at him, Mrs. Hutchings asked, on behalf of one of the girls present who was about to become a bride:

"Can't you give us a message, Patience, for Miss R—? Perhaps you were a bride yourself."

Ye gods! exclaimed the spirit. Let bygones be bygones! One of the women present laughed loudly at this salty and hugged her husband, giving him a resounding kiss.

The smack of a peasant, commented Patience Worth tartly. Once, during a sitting, when difficulty was encountered in understanding a phrase Patience had spelled out, the spirit was asked if they had understood her correctly.

Would that I had a letter-book with rhymes for thee, she returned.

At another time Mrs. Hutchings asked:

"Tell us something of conditions when you were on earth, Patience. You told us once that men were only a farthing's-worth to you."

A man loveth his wife, returned Patience, but ah, the buckles on his knee brecks!

The sitters called for more in the same vein.

Overfeeding will kill the Yuletide goose, returned the spirit.

This is but ordinary repartee, but the amazing thing is that these remarks were interspersed between dictating poems and novels, and that after them the dictation was resumed where it had left off!

One evening, while W. T. Allison, professor of English literature at the University of Manitoba was present, having come to St. Louis to study at first hand the spirit that was producing literature, a poem was dictated. He and several colleagues started a discussion of its composition and beauty.

Tish! Tish! came from the spirit. *Thou drivest!*

"Patience," came from one of the sitters, "your words are very precious to me."

Nay, nay nay, replied the spirit, speaking solemnly for the first time that evening. *The stuff is stolen. 'Tis His.*

A professor of physiology was present and he attempted to explain the phenomenon on scientific grounds, insisting that an explanation could be found without resorting to the supernatural.

This scientific discussion went on for a space, and then Patience spelled a message to him:

*Man, stand before God
at the end of thy wisdom,
and bow.*

IN time it was thought wise to have the state of Mrs. Curran's health looked into. The physicians who examined her found her perfectly normal. While the spirit's words were issuing from her, she sat in a relaxed position, her hands either held limply in her lap or hanging by the side of her chair. Mrs. Curran said she felt a slight pressure on the top of her head whenever the poems and utterances came.

Writers, who know how difficult it is to produce good "copy" without rewriting, polishing and trimming, were utterly amazed at the strange phenomenon, for Patience Worth, through Mrs. Curran, dictated poems and novels at the unprecedented speed of one-hundred and ten words a minute.

And never was it necessary to change a single phrase or word!

Still unsatisfied, the skeptics declared that Mrs. Curran simply composed these remarkable poems and stories in advance, memorized them and then uttered them as coming from the spirit, and they asked Patience if she could compose poetry with equal facility if they gave her the subjects.

Patience Worth agreed, and the sitters shot subject after subject at her, only to have her come back instantly with extraordinary verses on whatever subjects they named, frequently taking less time in composing the poem than the questioners did in thinking up a subject!

One day, when Professor Allison was there, the conver-

sation turned upon Shelley and his vivid, ethereal poetry.

"Give us a poem on a dead skylark," asked one of the investigators of the spirit.

Instantly Patience Worth dictated a poem of three stanzas. Space forbids quoting it entirely but the first verse will give the reader a notion of its quality, coming, it must be remembered, in the space of less than two minutes!

Oh, wing that hath stilled

Of beating the heavens, and descended!

Oh, throat that is empty and song that is gone!

*Oh, eyes that knew,
with intimate*

*Contact, the leafy glen
And the shadowy boats
that swung*

*Beneath the sunned
leaves!*

*Oh, breast that panted
of the joy*

*Of spring, and knew
the thrill*

*Of summer's heights!
Little companion of the
heavens;*

What, hast thou fallen!

A Mystery—Without a Key



Doctor Prince,
research officer of
the Boston Society
for Psychic Re-
search, is one of
the most intelli-
gent occult inves-
tigators in the
world.

Walter Franklin Prince

a caricature

by Lew Aiello

After ten years of probing the "Patience Worth" mystery, he confesses he can find no natural explanation for the ghostly flood of literature, purporting to come from the spirit of a fun-loving English girl who died 300 years ago.

Mrs. Curran, the medium, is not an educated woman—but, under the control of "Patience Worth," she has dictated masterpieces of prose and poetry at the incredible rate of 110 words a minute.

EDGAR LEE MASTERS, the noted poet, was present. He suggested a poem on shadows in order to test Patience Worth's spontaneous composition. Instantly the response came, the entire poem taking only three minutes!

SHADOWS

*Shadows!
Little winged shadows,
flitting like gray birds
beneath the leaf bower.
Somber shadows, be-
clouding shadows,
swept forward blotting
out the sun.
Shadows, thin silver
shadows, little fleck-
clouds, passing o'er the
moon's face.
Shadows, crimson shad-
ows, the touch of the
scarlet sun, lingering
upon night's sombre
robes.
Shadows, purple shad-
ows, lined delicately
against the night by
the silver of the moon,
Like shining dust upon
its royal garb—
Shadows, Shadows.
Phantoms? Yet I behold
them.*

When this poem had ended, Masters was asked by investigators present whether anyone could write poetry in the way Patience Worth's verses were coming—swiftly, with no re-writing, finished in form and matter.

The poet looked at his questioners with amazement written on his face.

"There is only one answer to that," he said. "It simply cannot be done!"

Yet it was, and is, being done!

Clement Wood, author and poet, was completely swept off his feet when he read the novel *The Sorry Tale*, which Pa-

tience Worth had dictated at the rate of over a hundred words a minute, with never a change in phrase or word. Wood discussed at length the beauty of form, the perfection of language and the marvelous insight into characters and persons in this story dealing with the life and death of Christ.

Especially did he point out that anyone under Biblical influence would not have been able to quote Christ without recourse to the phrases used in the Bible. Nevertheless Patience Worth quotes Christ, using none of the phrases attributed to Jesus in the Book, yet giving Him words which are essentially such words as Jesus would have uttered.

Wood said:

"The passage 'Unto thee do I deliver the watchword of the Kingdom—Mercy. Unto thee do I deliver the Key—Faith. Unto thee do I deliver the Kingdom—Love.' This is as exquisite as *Corinthians 13*, the loveliest part of the New Testament."

AUTHORS, writers, professors—all are puzzled, unable to explain the extraordinary phenomenon of a spirit dictating such marvelous passages of beauty at such incredible speed.

Commenting upon the characters in *The Sorry Tale*, of which he had made an historical analysis, Professor Roland Greene Usher, holding the chair of history at Washington University, St. Louis, said:

"These are not Nineteenth Century Americans masquerading as Jews and Romans, falling off their camels and hobbling around on their bare feet. They seem to be, inside as well as outside, men and women of the years when Christ was on earth.

"The sheer beauty of the chapter on the Sermon on the Mount; the spirituality of the passage descriptive of the Last Supper, and the evening at Gethsemane; the moving narrative of the last days, and the terrific climax of the Crucifixion, I shall not soon forget."

After learnedly watching, investigating and studying the phenomena of the case, Professor William E. Slaght, formerly professor of philosophy at Baker University and at present professor of psychology at Cornell University made the following statement:

"Nothing can come from the subconscious mind without filtering first through the conscious."

And, after uttering this statement, he confessed that it was impossible for Mrs. Curran's utterances to have come from her subconscious mind!

Professor Allison, who devoted considerable time to the investigations and was present at a number of sittings over a prolonged period, gave his views in the followings words:

"Where, she (Patience Worth) writes in modern English,

as in the first two stories or couches her words in the speech of a bygone age, she shows the most wonderful command of local color and of the customs and humors of the past, so that one is tempted to say that she must have seen the events and characters she describes.

"*Hope Trueblood* (another novel dictated by Patience Worth) is one of the most gripping stories of English peasant life, and one of the most powerful character novels I have ever read.

"Suppose a woman of your acquaintance who had lived in your town and city for many years and had never written a letter or news item for a local paper, began to dictate to her husband first-class poetry in quaint idiom, novels up to the George Eliot standard in modern style, to say nothing of

witty or profound remarks brought out in casual conversation with friends or visitors.

"What would you make of such a performance? No words or phrases in story or poem need to be changed.

"To me, this is one of the most striking features of this mysterious business, for every writer, even the most practiced hand, knows how often he has to change words or phrases, perhaps whole sentences, before his manuscript is smooth enough for publication.

"Patience Worth must be regarded as the outstanding phenomenon of our age, and I cannot help thinking of it all the time."

After much praise of *The Sorry Tale*, Professor Allison continued:

"No book outside the Book of books gives such an intimate picture of the earthly life of Jews and Romans in the Palestine of the day of our Lord. . . .

I HAVE been amazed at the rapidity of Mrs. Curran's utterances. And yet, while the method of communication was so fast that I couldn't begin to keep pace with the spelling, when Mr. Curran

read over each paragraph of the novel being composed, it made not only sense, but beautiful English, perfect in metre and rich in imagination.

"In one evening fifteen poems were produced in one hour and a quarter, an average of five minutes for each one. All were poured out with a speed that Tennyson or Browning could never have hoped to equal, and some of the fifteen lyrics are so good that either of these great poets might be proud to have written them."

The great praise given the poems and the novels emanating from the spirit calling herself Patience Worth, as well as the wit and wisdom that poured forth in a seemingly endless stream, caused many investigators to insist that Mrs. Curran was composing them herself simply to enjoy the notoriety.

Henry Holt, the late publisher, a capable judge of litera-

Two daredevil flyers, performers of hair-raising stunts for the movies—partners in life and AFTER! Read how one of them went to a terrible doom—and how he came back, in amazing fashion, to help his friend! Their strange story, entitled

"My Phantom Pal"

appears in the August GHOST STORIES. It will give you more thrills and shivers than anything you have ever read!

In the same issue:

The Inexperienced Ghost

By H. G. WELLS

Author of *The Outline of History*, *The Invisible Man*, etc.

My Strange Adventure with a Vampire

By W. Adolphe Roberts

The Specter in the New Hotel

An astounding true story of a wraith on Broadway

and a DOZEN other unusual, creepy stories!

Don't miss the August GHOST STORIES—on all news stands July 23rd!

ture, who made a trip to St. Louis to study the phenomena, expressed himself on this point as follows:

"It has, of course, been suggested that Mrs. Curran plays the Patience Worth trick for the sake of notoriety, but how utterly impossible it is that a woman capable of composing work of which some specimens are declared by competent critics to be very close to masterpieces, should, loving notoriety, try to throw upon another intelligence the credit for her work, and smother it in a language which nobody uses! That, indeed, requires an effort to understand."

One evening, while about one hundred persons, including professors, psychologists, editors, writers and publishers, were present, the greatest test of all was put to the spirit of Patience Worth by a shrewd professor of psychology who had been attending the manifestations for a period.

Patience Worth had been dictating a novel at her usual rate of speed, followed by poetry and conversation. With a quizzical smile on his lips, the professor interrupted the performance by asking the spirit if she would submit to three tests. She signified her willingness.

"VERY well," said the professor, while the others listened eagerly. "Please dictate about three hundred words on *The Sorry Tale* (it was then being written). Then give us a poem, after which I want a few minutes of your brilliant conversation, then a few hundred words of *Hope Trueblood* (also being composed at that time), then a few more minutes of conversation, after which I should like to have you resume dictation on *The Sorry Tale* exactly where you left off, then another poem, a little more of your brilliant conversation, another poem, and then about two hundred words of *Hope Trueblood*, picking up exactly where you left off.

"When I want you to stop dictating I will interrupt and give the subjects for the poems I want you to compose. And," he added dryly, "please dictate at the same rate of speed at which you have been dictating."

Those present looked at each other. No living human being could do that. The memory requirement alone was too much, let alone the other factors that would enter in. It had never before been done, and even a spirit with as facile a tongue as Patience Worth's might well hesitate.

Nevertheless, Patience Worth started immediately to dictate on *The Sorry Tale*, picking up exactly where she had left off at the last dictation, and speaking through Mrs. Curran at the rate of one hundred and ten words a minute, to the amazement of the professor, who called:

"Enough! Now, please, a poem on—er—" He could not think of a subject fast enough!

Sluggish dullard! taunted Patience Worth.

"Dust!" exclaimed the professor.

Instantly there came a poem, which is given at the end of this story.

When the poem was completed, the professor conversed with the spirit for a few minutes, receiving caustic comments about himself and others present. Suddenly he called a halt and asked that she dictate on *Hope Trueblood*. Instantly a flow of picturesque, poetic words came, picking up the story exactly where it had been interrupted!

In short, Patience Worth did what was deemed utterly impossible for any human being—something that had never

been done before by even the most brilliant minds of which there is any record.

When this test had been completed the professor looked around the assembled company. His face was pale.

"One thing more, please," he said a little more quietly. "You are well known for your wit and proverbs. Please give me some proverbs."

Instantly there came:

When manna falls, fill thyself and question not.

A hen betrays not its nest with loud cackle.

An owl is silent and credited with much wisdom.

To brew a potion, needs must have a pot.

Weak yarn is not worth the knitting.

He who knoweth worth is rich indeed.

It taketh a wise man to be a good fool.

"Enough!" said the professor. "Now, one more test. I will give you two subjects upon which I wish you would compose poems simultaneously. Dictate one line of one poem and another of the second poem, and alternate until both poems are completed."

The professor gave the subjects, and in the hush of the room, Mrs. Curran's lips uttered first one line of poetry, then another. Two persons took them down. Within six minutes two poems were completed! There had not been even a pause of a second between dictating one line and the next!

When these were finished, the sitters were dumfounded. Three tests, two of which were almost impossible, had been conducted, and the spirit had passed with flying colors—the spirit doing what had never before been done in the world!

So it has been since 1913, and the spirit of Patience Worth, still working through Mrs. Curran, is dictating extraordinary verses, novels, poems, while the most eminent of scholars can find no explanation of it in their books or laboratories.

That Mrs. Curran is not, consciously or unconsciously, doing the writing herself is now generally accepted by even the most conservative investigators who have had her under observation for many years.

The only conclusion which the most skeptical of the scientists could reach is best expressed in the words of Doctor Walter Franklin Prince, noted psychologist and executive officer of the Boston Society for Psychic Research, a man who has devoted more than ten years to an extraordinarily painstaking scrutiny of the case of Patience Worth:

"Either our concept of what we call the subconscious must be radically altered so as to include potencies of which we hitherto have had no knowledge, or else some cause operating through, but not originating in, the subconsciousness of Mrs. Curran must be acknowledged."

Meanwhile Patience Worth is with us, to scoff at those who insist that science can explain even the "supernatural"; to mock the wise and rake them over the coals with her scintillating wit and biting repartee, and to give them at the same time, visions of Charity, Faith and Love that abide forever.

But all the worldly things men set their hearts upon—ah, for those she has a word—the word that she gave to the professor of psychology who put her to the most amazing test of all. "Dust" was one of the subjects he had given her for a poem, and in that poem is Patience Worth's answer to those who seek the rewards of this earth:

DUST

*Dust, dust, dust—the mould of kings,
Bits of the Orient, ashes of wise men,
The clod from the foot of the fool,
Dead roses, withered leaves, crumbling
Palaces, man's hopes and desires.
The tears of ages, and stuff of all mankind,
Dust, dust, awaiting the hand of God
To intermingle and resurrect.
Dust, dust, dust—tomorrow unborn.
Dust, dust—yesterday's ashes.*

HAUNTED

In a desperate effort to unmask the "Scorpion," Ali Cassim baits his trap with a living woman—the lovely Elinor Dean, movie star! A weird and unexpected climax follows



With a low, half-animal cry, the actress lunged toward the blind director!

TRAGEDY seemed to dog the filming of Frank Padgett's mystery story, *The Scorpion*—the final catastrophe being an explosion which blinded the author himself. At Padgett's command, Clayton Caldwell, a friend of mine, was made director, and I, against my will, was named as assistant to him on the hoodoo picture.

Despite his affliction, Padgett was determined to carry on, and set the evening following his dismissal from the hospital for a conference of the directors and cast. Caldwell and I, therefore, went over the script and came to some amazing conclusions.

The "*Scorpion*" in Padgett's story is a human fiend who preys on screen celebrities through their weakness for drugs or occult practices. He has financed the famous star "Lucille Ames," who later falls in love with a novelist who tries to rescue her from the snare of the "*Scorpion*." Finally, fearing that she will disclose his identity, the Evil One forces the actress to commit suicide.

The amazing coincidence struck me that Padgett's own fiancée, the beautiful star, Sybil Dale, had taken her own life and had willed to Padgett her estate on which he now lived—Eagle's Nest. I said nothing of this to Caldwell, but we both made the discovery that the final sequence of the story had not yet been written!

That very evening, at my home in Laurel Canyon, I received a surprising phone call from Elinor Dean, a charming girl who was playing the part of "Lucille Ames" in *The Scorpion*. She seemed almost hysterical in her desire to see me and at her request we drove to a road-house where she told me that the ghost of the unfortunate Sybil Dale had visited her! The wraith had appeared to be urging Elinor to pack up and flee from Hollywood. Immediately afterward, on the table in her living room, she had found a blood-red square of paper bearing in one corner—a writhing golden Scorpion!

At Elinor's suggestion we called upon Ali Cassim, a Hindu mystic in the cast, who had, mysteriously enough, been expecting us. With the aid of his beryl ball, Cassim conjured up the Evil One in the form of a cone-shaped swirl of smoke which formed the message: "GO TO THOSE WHO CROSS MY PATH!"

Upon the conclusion of this manifestation, Cassim warned

HOLLYWOOD

By
GEORGE T. OSBORN
As told to
Wilbert Wadleigh



Elinor that she was to be the pawn of this sinister force and that her only safeguard was the love which he said was fated to develop between her and myself—a love that would be the Scorpion's undoing.

The next evening, after the conference at which Padgett had pledged the whole cast to stand by him to the completion of the picture, Elinor and I were leaving together in my car. Swiftly, mysteriously, the Hindu's black sedan swerved alongside and Cassim's voice hissed: "Come to my house! The enemy is preparing to strike!"

I COMFORTED Elinor as best I could as I headed my car out of the shadowy driveway of *Eagle's Nest*, but I will confess that Cassim's words had sent a chill through me. The "Scorpion"—this mysterious fiend of the occult, who had spun his hideous web in Hollywood, of all places; whom we had thought merely a character in Frank Padgett's novel and scenario of that name—was preparing to strike; perhaps this very night!

The night itself seemed portentous of evil. Dark clouds were massed across the sky; not the faintest breeze stirred, and the atmosphere was heavy and misty.

The long black sedan of the Hindu was half a block ahead of us, and was picking up speed. I kept my eyes on the tail-light of the car, wondering what terrible new secret had

prompted Cassim to request our presence at his house—and how he had learned this secret. Did the conference that poor, blind Frank Padgett had just con-

cluded at the unfortunate Sybil Dale's home have anything to do with it?

"Aren't you going to catch up with Cassim?" Elinor's strained voice broke into my reflections, when I made no attempt to decrease the distance between us and the Hindu's black sedan.

"It might not be wise," I said, without concealing my agitation. "In fact, I think we'd better take a different route to Cassim's place." And on sudden inspiration, I turned into a side street that I knew would take us into Beverly Boulevard.

I heard Elinor take a quick breath.

"Oh, George—you don't think—we're being watched right now? Followed?"

I hardly knew what to reply. I hadn't thought that, exactly; my remark had been without forethought, impulsive, as had my subsequent action in turning off the avenue. But, on considering Elinor's question, I realized that I didn't have the feeling of being watched and followed! I couldn't ex-

"Elinor!" I
screamed.
"Stop—"

plain it, yet, even as I told myself that such a state of affairs was both unlikely and unwarranted, the feeling remained.

"Cassim might not like us to follow right behind him," I replied evasively. Then, with more frankness: "If what he said just now is true—that danger threatens—his movements might be of interest to—the enemy."

"The enemy!" Her voice was low and tremulous. "Truly, he is that—an enemy of all that stands for good; a very priest of Satan!"

I made no reply, save to nod grimly. *Priest of Satan!* The title was apt for the "Scorpion." Fresh in my mind was the horrible experience Elinor herself had been through the previous night in her hotel apartment, when she had been visited, first by the ghost of Sybil Dale—then by that invisible monstrous presence which had sought to enslave her will, even as *The Scorpion* of Frank Padgett's daring story had preyed upon its heroine.

WE soon gained the wide expanse of Beverly Boulevard, and once on the well-lighted thoroughfare, with the stream of gleaming motors passing in both directions, I felt better.

"Elinor," I said impulsively, "you know the truth, now. You know that the character of Lucille Ames whom you are portraying in the film version of Padgett's story, *The Scorpion*, was in real life none other than the late Sybil Dale, a Summit star like yourself. Knowing this—knowing that every attempt made to complete the picture has been defeated by tragedy, why don't you break your contract?"

It must be admitted that my question was little short of treachery, in view of the fact that I was, as assistant to director Clayton Caldwell, an important member of the *Scorpion* production unit. My suggestion was, perhaps, the more reprehensible, coming as it did, on the heels of the conference at *Eagle's Nest*, during which I—as had Elinor and other members of the company—promised the blind but determined Padgett unflinching loyalty in seeing the production to a successful conclusion. But Elinor had come to mean something to me, and the thought of harm befalling her through her association with the hated picture was unbearable.

"Why, George!" she exclaimed, regarding me reproachfully with her wide, brown eyes, "how can you suggest such a thing? Didn't Frank Padgett pick me from an obscure tent-show dramatic company to play Lucille Ames? Didn't he give me a marvelous opportunity to start at the top rung of a motion-picture career?"

"I know that," I admitted, "but—"

"And poor Frank is so set on completing the picture! You heard him say tonight that its completion means more to him than anything in the world, and he begged all of us to see it through—even made us promise on our honor."

There was a tinge of disappointment in her tone, and I felt ashamed of myself.

"Forgive me, Elinor," I said humbly. "Perhaps I was—just selfish. You've come to mean so much—" I dared not go on.

She was instantly contrite, snuggling closer, a tendril of her hair brushing my cheek.

"Oh, George—" she breathed; "I'm sorry. You believe, then, what Ali Cassim revealed to us last night? That we are fated to—love each other, and—to get married?"

I was profoundly stirred. Fate? Yes, it seemed as though fate had thrown us together; I could believe nothing else, in the face of the emotion I now felt.

"It isn't hard for me to believe such a wonderful thing," I replied with feeling, "for the first time I saw you at the studio is still fresh in my memory—your eyes, your voice—"

She laughed, a musical, gay little laugh that I had heard only on rare occasions; and never since the first tragedy that had hampered the production of *The Scorpion*—the

mysterious fire that had done damage estimated at a hundred thousand dollars, and had resulted in the failure of the old Summit Company and the formation of the new Summit Productions, Incorporated, under Frank Padgett.

"Why, George Osborn!" She chuckled. "Don't you know there's no moon tonight? That its mellow radiance is sickled o'er! with nasty, black clouds?"

Her mirth was infectious.

"That did sound rather foolish, and clumsily put," I admitted good-humoredly. "Ignore the remark—but don't quite forget it. Here's where we turn off."

We had come to the palm-fringed street where the Hindu mystic had his residence, and as we approached our destination I fell to speculating upon this mysterious son of India. To me, only forty-eight hours before, Ali Cassim had been merely a "type"; a character actor whom Padgett had found to play the part of Chundra Sha in the "hoodoo" picture. But I now knew that Cassim was not only a celebrated clairvoyant and mystic, but the very seer whom the late Sybil Dale had consulted at the eleventh hour in the hope of escaping from the toils of the "Scorpion."

"AS I understand it," I said, "Cassim is keeping in close touch with Padgett regarding the subtle movements of—the enemy. Sort of ticklish business, trying to checkmate the evil forces that have determined to destroy them. What do you know of Cassim, Elinor?"

"Not much," she confessed. "Like you, I thought him merely an actor at first, but when we'd been two weeks in production, I had some scenes with him—where, as Lucille Ames, I was supposed to consult him. He—well, he didn't seem to be playing a part, as I was; he was himself, simply radiating force—perfectly at home in his strange rôle. Then, one day, we lunched together, and he cast my horoscope on the back of an envelope. I knew then that he was a real mystic, and of course I was deeply interested."

"How long has he been in America—in Hollywood?" I asked.

"I really don't know. He's never told me much about himself, though he seemed to take a liking to me from the start, and I have yet to find anyone who knows much about him. Frank knows a great deal regarding Cassim, of course, but then—"

She shrugged. I knew that Padgett was notoriously uncommunicative.

"Anyway," Elinor concluded, "Cassim and I were discussing spiritism, occult science, and kindred subjects one day, and he agreed with me that there were hundreds of charlatans who pose as mystics and not only victimize credulous persons, but bring about tragedies. I remember one remark he made: 'Some of these pretenders have a smattering of occult knowledge—enough to enable them to glimpse beyond the veil. But they catch distorted fragments of the truth, and worse, they try to fashion from these scattered elements complete pictures. They fail, but think they succeed. Perhaps their worst crime, however, is in imparting what they think they see to clients.'"

"The world is full of frauds," I remarked sagely.

"There was something else Cassim told me that made an impression," Elinor said. "As near as I can remember, it was this: 'There is one thing that persons who consult bona-fide clairvoyants should know, and that is, by learning the truth about their future, they run the risk of making the rest of their lives a misery of fear and anticipation. They do not seem to be able to realize that, regardless of what they may do, they cannot change what the stars have fated. There are rare souls whom the truth does not make wretched or vain, but they are few.' I thought that was interesting."



"Very," I agreed, noting with uneasiness that we were approaching the high box hedge that flanked the Hindu's estate. "Here we are, Elinor—and I hope the 'truth' finds us 'rare souls'!"

Cassim had arrived home but a few moments before, for his chauffeur was just driving the black sedan into the garage as I headed my roadster into the driveway.

For the second time in as many days, the outlandishly garbed Hindu boy admitted us and conducted us solemnly through the dark hallway to the reception room, with its dark purple velvet drapes, its thick oriental rugs and ornate teakwood pieces. The vitreous beryl globe, like a thing alive, glowed eerily upon the long table in the center of the room.

Once again the boy silently drew out chairs for us, one on either side of the table, and we sat down facing each other across the luminous periphery of the beryl globe. Like a phantom, the dusky boy withdrew, and we were surrounded by a stillness so profound that I could hear the ticking of my watch. Uneasily my eyes roved the room, my thoughts chaotic.

"How quiet it is in here!" Elinor whispered. "Not even street sounds seem to penetrate."

"That's because of the heavy velvet curtains, which deaden sound," I remarked.

THERE came a faint silken rustle at the back of the room, and the tall angular figure of Ali Cassim appeared, ghost-like, from some inner sanctum beyond the draperies. He wore the same flowing black silk robe with its mystic red characters and symbols, and the high turban of cream-colored silk, with its jeweled scimitar. His swarthy features were stern as he approached the high-backed chair at the head of the table, and his eyes, always a contrast to his dusky skin, seemed to borrow something of the vitreous luminosity of the beryl crystal on the table.

He wasted no time on commonplaces, acknowledging our presence with merely a grave nod, and took his seat.

"Before dawn tomorrow," he said, "the 'Scorpion' means to try our mettle. I shall not attempt to tell you how I came upon this knowledge; it is enough that I know. Whether he will use certain material means at his disposal, or rely upon his more subtle and misused occult powers remains to be seen. In any case, we must prepare."

His voice was calm and expressionless, like his dusky features, yet his words sent a queer feeling through me.

"Miss Dean," he addressed Elinor, "you have already had one experience with this monster, in your apartment. I look for something similar to happen tonight—"

"Oh!" she gasped, her features paling. "Must I go through that terrible experience again—face that hideous mental struggle with that evil presence?"

Cassim nodded grimly.

"Yes. But this time you will be amply protected, I can assure you. Both Mr. Osborn and I will be with you. I take it," he addressed himself to me, "that you are willing to take part in this experiment?"

"It is in the nature of an experiment, then?" I asked.

"Somewhat; I hope to trace the evil influence to its fountain-head. And your aid is essential, not only for the sake

of the experiment, but in affording Miss Dean complete protection."

"Then you can count on me," I promised, though I was considerably ill at ease.

"Very good." The Hindu smiled. "And now, I must look into the crystal."

He clapped his hands, and, as if by magic, the dusky boy appeared, bearing a small silver tray upon which was a tiny heap of gray ashes—no doubt the remains of the sinister "Scorpion" warning of the previous night. Cassim placed the tray between the three clawed feet of the pedestal that supported the mystic globe, spoke rapidly in Hindustani to the boy, who bowed, and took his departure. There was a sharp click, and the room was plunged into darkness, save for the faint luminosity of the beryl crystal—an eerie, green-blue luster.

"Clasp hands," came the Hindu's voice, "making an enclosure of your arms about the crystal."

We did so.

"And now we must all concentrate on one thing—the identity of the 'Scorpion.' Simply visualize that red paper, with the golden scorpion that was printed on it, and hold the picture vividly in your minds, to the exclusion of everything else. Now!"

It was not difficult for me to conjure up a vivid mental image of that sinister symbol in gold. Cassim began muttering to himself in some strange tongue, and swiftly, I felt the impression steal over me that we three were suspended in a great, Stygian void. The beryl globe, too, seemed adrift—a ghostly sphere that gradually, through some peculiar illusion, seemed to become a sort of planetary shape, millions of miles away.

TO this day, I cannot say whether the crystal was hollow or not; nor can I attribute an understandable reason for its luminosity. A vapor seemed to take form within it, whirling in spirals—tenuous wisps that grew in density until the whole globe seemed filled, and the illusion of movement ceased. In trying to describe its appearance at this stage, the best illustration that comes to mind is of the round globe of an incandescent arc light on a foggy night. The crystal, however, seemed alive.

Swiftly, little spots of color appeared on the glowing surface, and as I watched, fascinated, knowing that I was one of the few who could see, though not understand, this phenomenon, the colored figments seemed to merge into a yellowish mass.

"Reveal yourself, disciple of *Sitra*!" came Cassim's silent hiss. "I challenge you to reveal yourself!"

As if in answer to the Hindu's command, the yellowish mass assumed the shape of a head. Swiftly it gained in clearness, until a hideous face appeared—a face that struck stark horror into my soul. It was the face of no human being. Long, with a pointed chin and a mere slit of a mouth; small eyes set wide apart in deep sockets, glowing like coals; ears that ascended to a sort of a point at the top, and a bulging forehead that gave a wizard-like appearance to the ghastly face. The head of this monstrous apparition was totally bald, and there was only the suggestion of eyebrows, narrow and crescent-shaped, joining over the bridge

Priest of Satan

Hollywood is terrorized by the "Scorpion," an unidentified fiend who preys on motion-picture celebrities. This monster is known to have marked Elinor Dean as his next victim. Can George Osborn, her lover, save the beautiful actress from shame and disaster?

This amazing story is doubly interesting because it is based on FACTS. The author, Wilbert Wadleigh, has been associated with the moving-picture industry since its beginning—and he knows the dark and secret crannies of Hollywood as few men do.

of a long and prominent aquiline nose. It was the embodiment, the very essence of evil—positively satanic.

"The mask of Satan!" hissed Cassim. "I dare you to remove the mask, spawn of evil!"

The hideous face remained expressionless, mask-like, though the eyes sparkled evilly. Abruptly, red flames appeared in the surface of the beryl, mounting until they seemed to consume the evil countenance. The table, I thought, rocked slightly, while faintly, as from a great distance, came a blood-chilling, mocking laugh! No human voice could have uttered it, yet we all heard it distinctly. Elinor gave a low cry of terror, her fingers tightening in my grasp.

As the last peal of sardonic laughter was swallowed up by the velvet drapes, the crystal resumed its vitreous, blue-green luster. Cassim muttered to himself; there was a rustle of silk and a sharp click, and the dome light in the ceiling routed the gloom.

"You saw, Osborn?" Cassim asked me grimly, the veins standing out like cords over his cheek-bones.

I managed to incline my head, and he regarded Elinor.

"And you, Miss Dean?"

ELINOR confessed that she had seen nothing in the crystal, though she had heard the diabolical laugh. I was glad that she hadn't glimpsed that hideous face.

I sensed that Cassim himself had been profoundly shaken by what the crystal had revealed. I had never seen him so tense; so somber.

"The enemy was afraid to disclose his true mortal identity," the Hindu said. "I expected as much, so I am not disappointed." He glanced at his wrist watch. "Just ten after nine," he muttered. "Well, let us perfect our plans for the test that will come tonight. Osborn," he addressed me, "will your car accommodate the three of us?"

"Why, yes," I replied, surprised by the question. "It's just a roadster, though, and it would be a bit of a tight squeeze. But I have taken two passengers before."

"Good enough; we'll make the best of it," Cassim said. "Now we shall leave here directly for Miss Dean's hotel, and her apartment. We may be forced to remain there until well after midnight, so for the sake of appearances, I have engaged as a chaperon a woman who has been of considerable service to me at various times. She is awaiting us now in the lobby of the hotel."

"Now here is my plan, roughly: Once we are in the apartment, you, Miss Dean, are to try and keep from thinking of our presence, and lose yourself in a book or magazine. But until then—and this is very important, Miss Dean—your mind must dwell upon the 'Scorpion', and the evil he represents."

"That will not be difficult," Elinor shuddered.

"Very well," Cassim continued. "As for you, Osborn," he said to me, "you are to try and forget me, and think only of Miss Dean. You can worship her silently, if you wish; but wholeheartedly, to the exclusion of everything else. . . . I am serious, young man!" he added as I smiled.

"My task will hardly be difficult," I said, glancing at Elinor. She lowered her lashes, a faint flush suffusing her cheeks.

"I believe you," Cassim remarked dryly. "However, remember, both of you, that a great deal depends upon the maintenance of these mental attitudes. Occult and psychological reasons are involved, and my purpose is simply to safeguard you, Miss Dean, against the insidious force that will seek to take possession of you tonight, and to endeavor to trace this power to its evil source—"

"There is no—danger?" Elinor asked anxiously.

"None, if you follow my orders faithfully," Cassim said with a reassuring smile.

"This is not all quite clear to me," I announced. "You say that Elinor is to think of the 'Scorpion' between the time we leave here and the time we arrive at her apartment."

There she is to lose herself completely in some book—"

"Exactly; I want her to think of the 'Scorpion' in the interval because, by so doing, she will be sending out thought vibrations that the enemy is bound to recognize—and, I might add, welcome. Where you come in, Osborn, is as a connecting link that will prevent the enemy from getting Miss Dean under his power while on our way to the hotel, or after we arrive there—"

"Ah—I maintain this worshipful attitude of mind, then, throughout our adventure tonight?"

"Yes. Here, in this house, the forces that I command will ward off any decisive move the enemy might choose to make. Once we have stepped out of the house, however, we must be on our guard. But enough of explanations! What mental attitude are you to adopt, Miss Dean?"

"I am to think of the 'Scorpion', and all he stands for," she said gravely.

"Exactly—and nothing else. And you, Osborn?"

"I am to think of Elinor, and all she means to me," I answered, "and nothing else."

"Good. And now that you both understand, let us start at once for the hotel."

He clapped his hands, and the boy appeared. Cassim issued some instructions in his native tongue, and the boy, acknowledging them with only a grave bow, hurried out, to return with an overcoat. Cassim slipped out of the silken robe, into his coat, and a few moments later we were headed toward Hollywood.

If there was ever a stranger situation, I cannot conceive of it. During the trip to the hotel, not one word was spoken, each of us engrossed in our separate thoughts. Whatever Cassim's were, I do not know.

At the hotel, a complacent-looking, elderly woman rose from a seat in the lobby and joined us without a word, and we four ascended in the lift together. It was only when we had entered Elinor's apartment that Cassim introduced the newcomer as "Madame Fennier."

The Hindu lost no time in setting the stage for the test that was to come. He had Elinor select a book, and settle herself comfortably on a day-bed. Next, he arranged a bridge lamp so that it would provide not only light for her reading, but the only illumination in the room, as we soon discovered.

"We are ready," Cassim announced, when he had seated Madame Fennier and myself on theavenport opposite Elinor, and had set a chair for himself midway between. "Now remember, Osborn, you are to think of Miss Dean, and what she means to you, and you are to maintain this mental attitude, *no matter what happens!* Is that perfectly clear?"

"Well—" I faltered, "suppose that, in spite of myself, my mind becomes somewhat diverted by what may happen?"

"THAT does not matter particularly, as long as you keep the thoughts of Miss Dean uppermost—especially when the crisis arrives. That is clear, I trust?"

"Yes."

"Good. Are you ready to concentrate on your book, Miss Dean?"

Elinor said that she was, a bit nervously. I thought there was something wonderful about her courage.

"All right," Cassim said. He made some remark to Madame Fennier in French that I didn't catch. She nodded, her eyes on Elinor, and the Hindu went to the wall switch and pressed the button, plunging the room into semi-darkness. Quietly, Cassim returned and seated himself, his eyes upon Elinor—and the strange duel began.

I was somewhat chagrined to find my attention wandering, when several minutes had gone by in utter silence. It was hard to keep from speculating on the situation. Elinor must have had the same difficulty, for it was several minutes before she turned a page. But at last she did so, and I saw that she seemed to have acquired a mild interest in the book.

We had been sitting there for seeming ages—actually forty minutes, as it turned out—when I saw Cassim's figure tense. He seemed to be looking toward the shadows of the hall, and I followed his gaze. A chill swept over me as my eyes caught sight of a strange, tenuous shape. A ghost had entered the apartment! It was advancing into the room!

For a moment I forgot my part in this weird drama, and stared at the phantom in amazement and horror. The pressure of muscular fingers on my arm diverted my attention for a moment, and I looked around. Cassim had leaned toward me, his dusky features stern.

There was no need for a rebuke; I met his eyes, and nodded, and he turned to look again in the direction of the hall.

If the remainder of this account of that strange séance seems a bit vague the reader must bear in mind that the rôle I was playing prevented me from paying the fullest attention to what followed. To look in the direction of the phantom shape again would have been fatal; instead, I concentrated my attention upon Elinor's features, repeating over and over in my mind: "No harm shall come to you, Elinor; our lives are bound together by fate, and I love you." But my concentration wavered, as may be surmised. I knew that the spectral shape was drawing nearer; knew that the time was almost at hand when the "Scorpion" would strike.

I DARED not ask myself what connection this ghostly visitant had with the mysterious monster. That there was a connection, I could not doubt, for the atmosphere of the room had become surcharged; electric. Elinor seemed engrossed in her book, completely unaware that a phantom had entered her apartment. Even as I watched her, I saw her eyelids twitch, and then droop a little, as though she were becoming sleepy.

I redoubled my vigilance, regarding her fixedly. I heard a faint rustling on my right, but dared not look around. Then, out of the corner of my eye, I saw the ghostly shape again—saw it, yet dared not fix my full gaze upon it. Beads of cold sweat trickled down my face as I realized that the phantom had drifted behind Elinor, and was bending over her. A Thing without features, and with merely the suggestion of human form.

"Steady, Osborn!" came Cassim's faint whisper. "If we fail, it will be because of you."

I forced myself to regard Elinor with all the affection and concern for her safety that I could muster. Her eyes had closed and she was breathing heavily, as though in sleep, though the muscles of her face twitched unnaturally. Dimly I heard Cassim speaking softly in French, and heard Madame Fennier reply in the same language, her voice trance-like, and toneless. I had only a slight knowledge of French, but I gathered that Madame Fennier was a medium, and was now peering beyond the veil and making some reports to Cassim, in response to his whispered questions.

Swiftly, the atmosphere of the room became more oppressive, as though it were converging upon us, seeking to stifle us. I found myself breathing heavily, even painfully. Elinor's chin had dropped to her breast; suddenly the book slipped from her grasp and fell to the cushions at her side; she relaxed limply, as though now deep in slumber.

Instinctively, I knew that the crisis was at hand. With all my strength, I sought to bring my will to bear upon Elinor's, and I became aware that another mind—an evil and powerful one—was struggling with mine for supremacy. Fortunately for me, and for Elinor, Ali Cassim had the situation in hand. For an instant the ghostly shape seemed to merge with Elinor's body; then, drifting aside, it seemed to dissolve, and finally was gone. Immediately the oppressive atmosphere of the room lightened. Elinor stirred and sat up, her eyelids fluttering open.

"Why—why I must have fallen asleep!" she exclaimed, bewildered.

I turned my head uncertainly to regard Cassim. He was bending over Madame Fennier, who was trembling violent-

ly, her head resting against the back of the davenport, her eyes closed. The Hindu met my gaze, smiling reassuringly.

"It is all over, Osborn. Let's have the lights!"

I hurried to the switch, and soon the room was flooded with illumination. Madame Fennier was evidently herself again when I returned, though pale and haggard, and Cassim was patting Elinor's hand.

"Then the 'Scorpion' made his attack—and failed?" she was asking, incredulously.

"Yes," Cassim smiled grimly, "he failed. You can rest assured that the effort cost him an expenditure of jealously harbored forces—an effort that he cannot repeat tonight, at least."

He turned to me.

"I congratulate you, Osborn. You fought this battle almost alone—and I note from the perspiration on your face that it was a battle."

"But," I exclaimed, dazedly, "that phantom? I was not prepared for anything of that nature."

Cassim regarded me gravely.

"Were you not psychic, young man, you would not have seen it—"

"A phantom?" Elinor cried. "Was it—the ghost of Sybil Dale again?"

"No," the Hindu replied, "it was an astral body—the astral shape of that incarnate fiend, the 'Scorpion,' in fact!"

We stared at him, too horrified for speech.

"We defeated him, fairly and squarely," Cassim said grimly, "but he in turn defeated my plans for tracking him to his lair. Madame Fennier," he addressed the elderly Frenchwoman with a wry smile, "it was not your fault. I know you could have projected yourself wherever that shape might have taken you, had Miss Dean not awakened too soon."

"I—then I spoiled—" Elinor began contritely.

"Yes," Cassim shrugged, "but do not concern yourself, for you had no way of knowing what was going on. Better luck next time. At least we have won this issue. And now," he said, reaching for his coat, "our séance is at an end. You may look forward to complete peace tonight, Miss Dean, and I would advise you to retire directly and relax."

I helped him into his overcoat, and Elinor rose and accompanied us to the hallway, assuring me that now that the episode was over, she could face the rest of the night without fear.

I followed Madame Fennier and Cassim to the street, offering to see them home in my roadster, but Cassim declined, saying that we would be going in different directions, and he would prefer taking a taxi.

WHILE waiting for a cab, I referred to the strange experience we had been through. At the time, the difference between a ghost and an astral body was not quite clear to me and I said as much, frankly.

"An astral body is a living spirit," Cassim explained, "temporarily released from the human shell. That the 'Scorpion' was able to appear to us in this form is proof that he is familiar with certain profound occult secrets."

"Do I understand, then," I exclaimed, "that he is able to leave his body, take on this form, and come and go at will?"

"Not exactly at will," Cassim replied gravely. "That is, he requires the occult assistance of one or more confederates. Actually he is transposing what was intended to be a passive or negative state of spirit into a positive, or objective state—in order to accomplish positive, evil ends. The thing requires an enormous expenditure of vital force, and no little careful preparation, and if we could see the enemy now, we would see a man half dead from exhaustion. He would not be in this condition, had he used his knowledge and powers as God intended—in a negative, passive way, as a means of spiritual growth."

"Ah, eet es so, M'sieu," Madame Fennier assured me, as Cassim hailed a taxi on the Boulevard.

"What caused Elinor to fall into a sleep?" I asked. "And what would have happened had we failed to thwart the enemy's plans?"

"It was the presence of the evil one that caused Miss Dean to slip into what was really a semi-comatose state—a case of mental induction. Had we failed," Cassim said grimly, as the taxi drew up to the curb, "this evil spirit would have called forth Miss Dean's astral body, taken it prisoner—and left behind only a mortal shell. Or he might have taken on that shell himself. Can you imagine what that would have meant, Osborn?"

I stared at him in horror. With a shrug and an ironical smile, he helped Madame Fennier into the cab.

Needless to say, my drive home was featured chiefly by considerable grim speculation. Whoever the mysterious "Scorpion" was, who had determined to prevent the completion of Padgett's picture, I now knew that he was the very personification of Satan. My sleep that night was fitful, and distorted by horrible, chaotic dreams.

IT was along toward morning, when I awakened with a start, to see the ghost of Sybil Dale—the unfortunate star, and the original "Lucille Ames" of Frank Padgett's story, whom Elinor was portraying in the uncompleted picture—standing over me.

I could not move a muscle, could only stare at the ghostly features. She seemed to be smiling, and nodding her head at me in approval. The visitation lasted but a second or so, and was gone. Looking back, I know that I actually saw Sybil Dale's ghost, but at the time, I made myself believe that the visitation had been a part of my troubled dreams.

I reported at the Summit Studios at eight o'clock the next morning, and found Clayton Caldwell in his office, busily outlining the scenes to be taken on *The Scorpion* that day. He commented upon my haggard appearance, but I managed to make some commonplace excuse. Clay was not a believer in psychic or occult things, and though I longed to confide in him, to do so was out of the question.

We found that Frank Padgett had completed all but three scenes of that particular sequence the previous Saturday, when the mercury lamp had exploded and blinded him. So, with characteristic energy, Caldwell determined not only to film certain railroad depot scenes that afternoon, for which a hundred extra players had been ordered, but to "kill" a night sequence that was to be filmed in Laurel Canyon, where my lodge was situated.

"That will be pretty soft for you, George," he said. "When the last Canyon shot is taken, all you have to do is step into that bachelor cabin of yours, and hie yourself to the hay. And there are only four shots."

"Might as well clean it up," I agreed, and I hurried to the casting office to place an order for a motorcycle policeman, two limousines and chauffeurs, and two men who were to portray detectives for the Canyon shots.

The principals were all on hand at nine o'clock: Elinor, surprisingly bright and cheerful; Ali Cassim; Philip Benton, the leading man; Henry Lagrange, a heavy character man; Rose Harron, character woman, and a few minor players who had small parts.

By nine-thirty, the players were all assembled in make-up on the café set we were to finish with that morning; the lights and cameras were ready, and Caldwell, script in hand, conferred with the studio manager, Sam Weinberg. The latter announced that, true to his promise, Frank Padgett meant to supervise the filming of the rest of the ill-fated picture, and would arrive within a few minutes.

I shall never forget Padgett's arrival, at a little before ten that morning. He was brought to the set in a wheel-chair, and with him were his secretary, the personnel manager of the production, Arthur Taylor, and a special attendant from the hospital. His left hand and his whole head were completely covered by bandages. No stranger situation can be imagined than this poor, blinded, author-director "super-

vising" the long-delayed completion of his tragic picture.

But our pity and doubts soon gave way to respect and admiration when Padgett had Caldwell read the scene's continuity to him, and specified the positions of the players; their business, in detail; the tempo and moods of the action, and even the film footage the scenes were to run.

By noon, Caldwell had disposed of the set, barring possible re-takes. After lunch I checked off the extras we were to use in the depot scenes and loaded them into buses. Then we proceeded to the Southern Pacific Station in Los Angeles. The scenes that were to be filmed here would be inserted into the first part of the completed picture. They were to show a number of girls—beauty contest winners, represented by some of the extras—and Elinor, alighting from a train, and being received by the publicity heads of various studios. Later on in the film, some of these aspirants were to be depicted as victims of the "Scorpion," among them, of course, Elinor, as "Lucille Ames."

Padgett did not accompany the troupe on this occasion, trusting to Caldwell to use his own judgment. By three o'clock we had taken the necessary shots, and were on our way back to Hollywood.

Both Weinberg and Padgett were pleased with what had been accomplished that day, and arrangements were completed for the final "shots" that evening in Laurel Canyon.

"Who said this was a 'hoodoo' picture?" Caldwell scoffed, when we were going over reports and other details in his office late that afternoon. "Everything went smoothly today. Rank superstition—criminal asininity!"

I said nothing. It was on the tip of my tongue to acquaint Clay with what had happened the previous night, but I remembered Cassim's pledge of secrecy in time. However, the day was not yet over!

By nine o'clock that night, the necessary sun-arcs and properties had been transported to Laurel Canyon, and all was in readiness for the filming of what was supposed to represent a clash between the agents of the "Scorpion" and private detectives who were escorting "Lucille Ames" to an appointment with "Leslie Porter"—the author-director in the story, who, a few of us now knew, had been Frank Padgett himself, in real life.

In order that our activities in filming the road shots would not be interrupted by passing motor-cars, we waited until one o'clock before proceeding to the location.

Padgett had determined to be present, and arrived in his landau accompanied by his secretary, Taylor, and the hospital attendant. Caldwell conferred at length with him over the scenes that were to be taken, and what with various alterations and substitutions in the contemplated action, the chief cameraman and I had our hands full getting things in readiness.

AT last the first scene was successfully filmed. This merely showed Lucille Ames' limousine approaching and passing by. Then came the filming of the second and third shots, depicting the Ames car being pursued by that of the "Scorpion" agents, and the car of the desperados being overtaken by that of the detectives.

Remaining was the "big scene"—in which all three cars were to draw up in front of the cameras, and a spectacular gun-fight was to take place. In this scene, two of the bandits were to open the action by attempting to take Lucille Ames—in the person of Elinor—a prisoner.

But Caldwell experienced unexpected difficulties with Elinor, who seemed in a sort of daze, and unable to understand just what was required of her. Again and again Clay showed her that she was merely to allow the pseudo-bandits to drag her from the car, and then, drawing a stiletto, make a show of trying to defend herself. But despite all his coaching Elinor's actions remained stiff and unnatural.

Concerned, I stepped forward, and the sight of her white face and heavy eyes gave me a shock.

"Are you ill, Elinor?" I asked, and when she made no an-

swer, I added, "This is the last scene, and there'll only be two takes of it, and then we're through for the night."

Her eyes met mine in an abstracted gaze that sent a shiver through me, and something of the horrible truth burst upon me. She was under the spell of the "Scorpion!"

Before I could collect my stupefied senses, Padgett spoke somewhat irritably from his canvas chair near the cameras: "Come now, Elinor! The action is simple enough, and you know the 'script' by heart. We'll try a take of it, anyway, Caldwell!"

A low, half-animal scream cut him short. I turned to see from whence the cry had come, and to my horror saw Elinor, her eyes wide and staring, the gleaming stiletto upraised, springing toward the blind and helpless Padgett!

"Elinor!" I screamed. "Stop!"

I had presence of mind enough to spring forward, and catch hold of her wrist just as she was about to plunge

the stiletto into Padgett's back. Taylor joined me, and together we tried to subdue Elinor, who seemed possessed of maniacal fury and strength.

But suddenly she relaxed limply, and we saw that she had fainted.

"What—whatever came over her?" gasped Caldwell, reaching the spot, but the tall figure of Ali Cassim thrust him aside.

"She will be all right presently. Dick," to the property boy, "bring a glass of water—"

Suddenly a shot rang out from the grove across the road, and a bullet whined by Cassim's head.

"Lights—kill the lights!" cried Padgett. "Take cover, everybody!"

The sun-arcs were switched off, plunging the canyon into gloom—just as another shot sounded. Taylor, revolver in hand, had fired at two shadowy figures across the road!

The "Scorpion" has struck again! The astral body of the fiend has taken possession of Elinor Dean! What will it do to the beautiful movie actress—and to her lover? Who will be the next ill-starred victim? Read it yourself—the incredible struggle of good, of right, of love, pitted against the remorseless forces of Evil—in the next issue of GHOST STORIES, on sale at all news stands July 23rd. "Haunted Hollywood" has still more secrets to hold you enthralled!

The Headless Woman of Griffintown

EVERY seven years the ghost comes back to Griffintown. Police reserves rush into this little suburb of Montreal, children are kept indoors at night, citizens run through the streets screaming—all because of the Headless Horror.

Here is a ghost whose visitations have extended over a period of fifty years, a ghost that vanishes into nothingness until the fateful seven years have rolled around, and then reappears in as horrible a guise as can be imagined.

On October 26th, 1928, Francis Johnson, of Young Street, Griffintown, was walking peacefully through the dusk toward home. Mr. Johnson does not, or did not, believe in ghosts. Least of all did he expect to see one on the commonplace streets of a commonplace Canadian suburb in the Twentieth Century.

He was whistling as he walked, but as he turned the corner into William Street, the whistle died on his lips. Before him loomed a strange blur of dead white. He stopped, rubbed his eyes and looked again. He could see the street light streaming through the white, formless figure—and then, suddenly, the thing took shape. It was a woman—tall, gaunt and utterly transparent! Then, with a start, he saw clearly the worst horror of all.

The woman in white—the shimmering specter—had no head!

Johnson turned to run, and as he turned, the specter screamed.

It was, Johnson said, as bleak and eerie a sound as the howl of the banshee, and he took to his heels as fast as ever he could.

The next night, at the same time, a woman burst into the Young Street police station, screaming out a tale of terror. She was nearly hysterical with fright, for she had seen the Headless Horror!

The police, rather dubious of her story, doubled the patrols on that particular beat, but despite their precautions a dozen people on a dozen subsequent nights saw the headless specter. To some it appeared as a silent and blood-curdling apparition; others ran from the spot with the woman's uncanny screams still ringing in their ears.

Into Griffintown rushed the police reserves, keen on the track of what they believed might be a practical joker. Into Griffintown came the newspaper correspondents, on the alert for a sensational beat.

The Montreal Star began running special stories on the

specter. The Rector of St. Anne's Church wrote letters concerning the probable harmlessness of the apparition. Old citizens came forward to testify that they themselves had seen the Headless Horror seven years ago, and that friends and relatives had seen it seven years before that.

At midnight, on October 30th, the reporters were idling about the police station when the telephone rang and a terrified voice screamed over the wire, "The White Woman—the headless woman—she's on steps of St. Anne's Church!"

The police and reporters rushed to the church, to find nothing but darkness. But half a mile away, at that very moment, two staid and respectable middle-aged citizens were standing transfixed with horror at sight of the specter.

Into the files delved the newspaper men and this is what they found:

The dread specter had not appeared prior to fifty years ago, when a woman was decapitated in the most brutal murder of Montreal's history. But the apparition had terrified Griffintown every seven years since!

Fifty years ago a woman named Mary Gallagher went to call on one Susan Kennedy. Late in the afternoon Mr. Kennedy came dashing out of the house, screaming at the top of his voice that a dead woman was in his kitchen.

Some of the children peered through the windows and saw, in the flickering candle light, Susan Kennedy, her eyes wide and vacant, staring fixedly at a woman's headless form on the floor. The body was that of the murdered Mary Gallagher.

No fictional ghost story has a more ghastly plot than this actual occurrence. Susan Kennedy was sentenced to be hanged; then sent to Kingston prison for life.

All this is to be found in the court records of Montreal. The rest—the apparition of the horrible headless woman, her blood-chilling screams, her regular reappearance at seven-year intervals—may be read by anyone in the files of the Montreal newspapers.

Why should the unhappy shade of Mary Gallagher return to terrorize the innocent dwellers in the town where she met her ghastly end? No one has ever found the answer to that query. But what the present-day residents of Griffintown wonder, is—will the Headless Horror roam their peaceful streets seven years hence—and every seven years to come?

This artist woke after midnight, bizarre images teeming

The MYSTERIOUS

*Little did he know that this fantastic picture would
bring him to the shadow of the gallows!*

By ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN



OPPPOSITE
SITE
the
chapel
of Saint Sebalt in
Nuremberg, at
the corner of
Trabaus Street,
there stands a
little tavern, tall
and narrow, with
a toothed gable
and dusty windows,

whose roof is surmounted by a plaster Virgin. It was there that I spent the unhappiest days of my life. I had gone to Nuremberg to study the old German masters; but in default of ready money, I had to paint portraits—and such portraits! Fat old women with their cats on their laps, big-wigged aldermen, burgomasters in three-cornered hats—all horribly bright with ochre and vermillion. From portraits I descended to sketches, and from sketches to silhouettes.

Nothing is more annoying than to have your landlord come to you every day with pinched lips, shrill voice, and impudent manner to say: "Well, sir, how soon are you

going to pay me? Do you know how much your bill is? No; that doesn't worry you! You eat, drink, and sleep calmly enough. God feeds the sparrows. Your bill now amounts to two hundred florins and ten kreutzers—it is not worth talking about."

Those who have not heard anyone talk in this way can form no idea of it; love of art, imagination, and the sacred enthusiasm for the beautiful are blasted by the breath of such an attack. You become awkward and timid; all your energy evaporates, as well as your feeling of personal dignity, and you bow respectfully at a distance to the burgo-master Schneegans.

feverishly in his brain, and he drew

SKETCH

The stranger's glance fell on the unfinished drawing—and he recoiled in terror



One night, not having a sou, as usual, and threatened with imprisonment by this worthy Mister Rap, I determined to make him a bankrupt by cutting my throat.

Seated on my narrow bed, opposite the window, in this agreeable mood, I gave myself up to a thousand philosophical reflections, more or less comforting.

"What is man?" I asked myself. "An omnivorous animal; his jaws, provided with canines, incisors, and molars, prove it. The canines are made to tear meat; the incisors to bite fruits; and the molars to masticate, grind, and triturate animal and vegetable substances that are pleasant to smell and to taste. But when he has nothing to masticate, this being is an absurdity in Nature, a superfluity, a fifth wheel to the coach."

Such were my reflections. I dared not open my razor

for fear that the invincible force of my logic would inspire me with the courage to make an end of it all. After having argued so finely, I blew out my candle, postponing the sequel till the morrow.

That abominable Rap had completely stupefied me. I could do nothing but silhouettes, and my sole desire was to have some money to rid myself of his odious presence. But on this night a singular change came over my mind. I awoke about one o'clock. I lit my lamp, and, enveloping myself in my gray gabardine, I drew upon the paper a rapid sketch after the Dutch school—something strange and bizarre, which had not the slightest resemblance to my ordinary conceptions.

Imagine a dreary courtyard enclosed by high dilapidated walls. These walls are furnished with hooks, seven or eight feet from the ground. You see, at a glance, that it is a butchery.

On the left, there extends a lattice structure; you perceive through it a quartered beef suspended from the roof by enormous pulleys. Great pools of blood run over the flagstones and unite in a ditch full of refuse.

The light falls from above, between the chimneys where the weathercocks stand out from a bit of the sky the size of your hand, and the roofs of the neighbouring houses throw bold shadows from story to story.

At the back of this place is a shed, beneath the shed a pile of wood, and upon the pile of wood some ladders, a few bundles of straw, some coils of rope, a chicken-coop, and an old dilapidated rabbit-lutch.

HOW did these heterogeneous details suggest themselves to my imagination? I don't know; I had no reminiscences, and yet every stroke of the pencil seemed the result of observation, and strange because it was all so true. Nothing was lacking.

But on the right, one corner of the sketch remained a blank. I did not know what to put there. . . . Something suddenly seemed to writhe there, to move! Then I saw a foot, the sole of a foot. Notwithstanding this improbable position, I followed my inspiration without reference to my own criticism. This foot was joined to a leg—over this leg, stretched out with effort, there soon floated the skirt of a dress. In short, there appeared by degrees, an old woman, pale, disheveled, and wasted, thrown down at the side of a well, and struggling to free herself from a hand

that clutched at her throat in an effort to strangle her.

It was a murder scene that I was drawing. The pencil fell from my hand.

This woman, in the boldest attitude, with her thighs bent on the curb of the well, her face contracted by terror, and her two hands grasping the murderer's arm, frightened me. I could not look at her. But the man—he, the person to whom that arm belonged—I could not see him. It was impossible for me to finish the sketch.

"I am tired," I said, my forehead dripping with perspiration. "There is only this figure to do; I will finish it to-morrow. It will be easy then."

And I went to bed again, thoroughly frightened by my vision.

The next morning, I got up very early. I was dressing in order to resume my interrupted work, when two little knocks were heard on my door.

"Come in!"

THE door opened. An old man, tall, thin, and dressed in black, appeared on the threshold. This man's face, his eyes set close together and his large nose like the beak of an eagle, surmounted by a high bony forehead, had something severe about it. He bowed to me gravely.

"Mister Christian Vénus, the painter?" said he.

"That is my name, sir."

He bowed again, adding:

"The Baron Frederick Van Spreckdal."

The appearance of the rich amateur, Van Spreckdal, judge of the criminal court, in my poor lodging, greatly disturbed me. I could not help throwing a stealthy glance at my old worm-eaten furniture, my damp hangings and my dusty floor. I felt humiliated by such dilapidation; but Van Spreckdal did not seem to take any account of these details.

"Mister Vénus," he resumed, "I come—" But at this instant the stranger's glance fell upon the unfinished sketch—and he recoiled in terror.

I was momentarily flattered at his naïve reaction to my gruesome picture; but somehow the attention that this personage bestowed upon the sketch made my heart beat with an indefinite apprehension.

At the end of a minute, Van Spreckdal turned to me.

"Are you author of that sketch?" he asked me with an intent look.

"Yes, sir."

"What is the price of it?"

"I never sell my sketches. It is the plan for a picture."

"Ah!" said he, exploring its surface with the tips of his long yellow fingers.

He took a lens from his waistcoat pocket and began to study the design in silence.

The sun was now shining obliquely into the garret. Van Spreckdal never said a word; the hook of his immense nose increased, his heavy eyebrows contracted, and his long pointed chin took a turn upward, making a thousand little wrinkles in his long, thin cheeks. The silence was so profound that I could distinctly hear the plaintive buzzing of a fly that had been caught in a spider's web.

"And the dimensions of this picture, Mister Vénus?" he said without looking at me.

"Three feet by four."

"The price?"

"Fifty ducats."

Van Spreckdal stepped over to the table, and drew from his pocket a large purse of green silk shaped like a pear; he pulled the rings of it—

"Fifty ducats," said he, "here they are."

I was simply dazzled.

The Baron rose and bowed to me, and I heard his big ivory-headed cane resounding on each step until he reached the bottom of the stairs. Then, recovering from my stupor, I suddenly remembered that I had not thanked him, and I flew down the five flights like lightning; but when I reached

the bottom, I looked to the right and left; the street was deserted.

"Well!" I said, "this is strange."

And I went upstairs again, all out of breath.

II

THE surprising way in which Van Spreckdal had appeared to me threw me into a deep wonderment.

"Yesterday," I said to myself, as I contemplated the pile of ducats glittering in the sun, "yesterday I formed the wicked intention of cutting my throat, all for the want of a few miserable florins, and now to-day Fortune has showered them from the clouds. Indeed it was fortunate that I did not open my razor; and if the same temptation ever comes to me again, I will take care to wait until the morrow."

After making these judicious reflections, I sat down to finish the sketch; four strokes of the pencil and it would be finished. But here an incomprehensible difficulty awaited me. It was impossible for me to make those four sweeps of the pencil; I had lost the thread of my inspiration, and the mysterious personage no longer stood out in my brain. I tried in vain to evoke him, to sketch him, and to recover him; he no more accorded with the surroundings than with a figure by Raphael in a Tenier's inn-kitchen. I broke out into a profuse perspiration.

At this moment, Rap opened the door without knocking, according to his praiseworthy custom. His eyes fell upon my pile of ducats and in a shrill voice he cried:

"Eh! eh! so I catch you. Will you still persist in telling me, Mr. Painter, that you have no money?"

And his hooked fingers advanced with that nervous trembling that the sight of gold always produces in a miser.

For a few seconds I was stupefied.

The memory of all the indignities that this individual had inflicted upon me, his covetous look, and his impudent smile exasperated me. With a single bound, I caught hold of him, and pushed him out of the room, slamming the door in his face.

This was done with the crack and rapidity of a spring snuff-box snapping shut.

But from outside the old usurer screamed like an eagle:

"My money, you thief, my money!"

The lodgers came out of their rooms, asking:

"What is the matter? What has happened?"

I OPENED the door suddenly and quickly gave Mister Rap a kick in the spine that sent him rolling down more than twenty steps.

"That's what's the matter!" I cried, quite beside myself. Then I shut the door and bolted it, while bursts of laughter from the neighbors greeted Mister Rap in the passage.

I was satisfied with myself; I rubbed my hands together. This adventure had put new life into me. I resumed my work, and was about to finish the sketch when I heard an unusual noise.

Butts of muskets were grounded on the pavement. I looked out of my window and saw three soldiers in full uniform with grounded arms in front of my door.

I said to myself in my terror: "Can it be that that scoundrel Rap has had any bones broken?"

And here is the strange peculiarity of the human mind: I, who the night before had wanted to cut my own throat, shook from head to foot, thinking that I might well be hanged if Rap were dead.

The stairway was filled with confused noises. It was an ascending flood of heavy footsteps, clanking arms, and short syllables.

Suddenly somebody tried to open my door. It was bolted.

Then there was a general clamor.

"In the name of the law—open!"

I arose, trembling and weak in the knees.

"Open!" the same voice repeated.

I thought to escape over the roofs; but I had hardly put my head out of the little snuff-box window, when I drew back, seized with vertigo. I saw in a flash all the windows below with their shining panes, their flower-pots, their bird-cages, and their gratings. Lower, the balcony; still lower, the street lamp; still lower again, the sign of the "Red Cask" framed in iron-work; and, finally, three glittering bayonets, only awaiting my fall to run me through the body from the sole of my foot to the crown of my head. On the roof of the opposite house a tortoise cat was crouching behind a chimney, watching a band of sparrows fighting and scolding in the gutter.

One cannot imagine what clearness, intensity, and rapidity the human eye acquires when stimulated by fear.

At the third summons I heard:

"Open, or we shall force it!"

Seeing that flight was impossible, I staggered to the door and drew the bolt.

Two hands immediately fell upon my collar. A dumpy little man, smelling of wine, said:

"I arrest you!"

He wore a bottle-green redingote, buttoned to the chin, and a stovepipe hat. He had large brown whiskers, rings on every finger, and was named Passauf.

He was the chief of police.

Five bull-dogs with flat caps, noses like pistols, and lower jaws turning upward, observed me from outside.

"What do you want?" I asked Passauf.

"Come downstairs," he cried roughly, as he gave a sign to one of his men to seize me.

THIS man took hold of me, more dead than alive, while several other men turned my room upside down.

I went downstairs supported by the arms like a person in the last stages of consumption—with hair disheveled and stumbling at every step.

They thrust me into a cab between two strong fellows, who charitably let me see the ends of their clubs, held to their wrists by a leather string—and then the carriage started off.

I heard behind us the feet of all the urchins of the town.

"What have I done?" I asked one of my keepers.

He looked at the

other with a strange smile and said in a queer voice: "Hans—he asks what he has done!"

That smile froze my blood.

Soon a deep shadow enveloped the carriage; the horses' hoofs resounded under an archway. We were entering the Rasperhaus. Of this place one might say:

*"Dans cet antre,
Je vois fort bien comme l'on entre,
Et ne vois point comme on en sort."*

ALL is not rose-colored in this world; from the claws of Rap I fell into a dungeon, from which very few poor devils have a chance to escape.

Large dark courtyards and rows of windows like a hospital, and furnished with gratings; not a sprig of verdure, not a festoon of ivy, not even a weathercock in perspective—such was my new lodging. It was enough to make one tear his hair out by the roots.

The police officers, accompanied by the jailor, took me temporarily to a lock-up.

The jailer, if I remember rightly, was named Kasper Schlüssel; with his gray woollen cap, his pipe between his



At this tavern in Nuremberg the young artist conceived the uncanny picture, which later proved a mysterious menace to his life

teeth, and his bunch of keys at his belt, he reminded me of the Owl-God of the Caribs. He had the same golden yellow eyes, that see in the dark, a nose like a comma, and a neck that was sunk between the shoulders.

Schlüssel shut me up as calmly as one locks up his socks in a closet, while thinking of something else. As for me, I stood for more than ten minutes with my hands behind my back and my head bowed. At the end of that time I made the following reflection: "When falling, Rap cried out, 'I am assassinated,' but he did not say by whom. I will say it was my neighbor, the old merchant with the spectacles: he will be hanged in my place."

This idea comforted my heart, and I drew a long breath. Then I looked about my prison. It seemed to have been newly whitewashed, and the walls were bare of designs, except in one corner, where a gallows had been crudely sketched by my predecessor. The light was admitted through a bull's-eye about nine or ten feet from the floor; the furniture consisted of a bundle of straw and a tub.

I sat down upon the straw with my hands around my knees in deep despondency. It was with great difficulty that I could think clearly; but suddenly imagining that Rap, before dying, had denounced me, my legs began to tingle, and I jumped up coughing, as if the hempen cord were already tightening around my neck.

At the same moment, I heard Schlüssel walking down the corridor; he opened the lock-up, and told me to follow him. He was still accompanied by the two officers, so I fell into step resolutely.

He walked down long galleries, lighted at intervals by small windows. Behind a grating I saw the famous Jic-Jack, who was going to be executed on the morrow. He had on a straitjacket and sang out in a raucous voice:

"Je suis le roi de ces montagnes."

Seeing me, he called out:

"Eh! comrade! I'll keep a place for you at my right."

The two police officers and the Owl-God looked at each other and smiled, while I felt the goose-flesh creep down the whole length of my back.

III

SCHLÜSSEL shoved me into a large and very dreary hall, with benches arranged in a semicircle. The appearance of this deserted hall, with its two high grated windows, and its Christ carved in old brown oak with His arms extended and His head sorrowfully inclined upon His shoulder, inspired me with a kind of religious fear that accorded well with my actual situation.

All my ideas of false accusation disappeared, and my lips trembly murmured a prayer.

I had not prayed for a long time; but misfortune always brings us to thoughts of submission. Man is so little in himself!

Opposite me, on an elevated seat, two men were sitting with their backs to the light, so that their faces were in shadow. However, I recognized Van Spreckdal by his aquiline profile, illuminated by an oblique reflection from the window. The other person was fat, he had round, chubby cheeks and short hands, and he wore a robe, as did Van Spreckdal.

Below was the clerk of the court, Conrad; he was writing at a low table and was tickling the tip of his ear with the feather-end of his pen. When I entered, he stopped to look at me curiously.

They made me sit down, and Van Spreckdal, raising his voice, said to me:

"Christian Vénus, where did you get this sketch?"

He showed me the nocturnal sketch which was then in his possession. It was handed to me. After having examined it a moment, I raised my eyes to the judge. "I am the author of it," I replied in a hollow voice.

A long silence followed; the clerk of the court, Conrad, wrote down my reply. I heard his pen scratch over the paper, and I thought: "Why did they ask me that question? That has nothing to do with the kick I gave Rap in the back."

"You are the author of it?" asked Van Spreckdal. "What is the subject?"

"It is a subject of pure fancy."

"You have not copied the details from some spot?"

"No, sir; I imagined it all."

"Accused Christian," said the judge in a severe tone, "I ask you to reflect. Do not lie."

"I have spoken the truth."

"Write that down, clerk," said Van Spreckdal.

The pen scratched again.

"AND this woman," continued the judge—"this woman who is being murdered at the side of the well—did you imagine her also?"

"Certainly."

"You have never seen her?"

"Never."

Van Spreckdal rose indignantly; then, sitting down again, he seemed to consult his companion in a low voice.

These two dark profiles silhouetted against the brightness of the window, and the three men standing behind me, the silence in the hall—everything made me shiver.

"What do you want with me? What have I done?" I murmured.

Suddenly Van Spreckdal said to my guardians:

"You can take the prisoner back to the carriage; we will go to Metzgerstrasse."

Then, addressing me:

"Christian Vénus," he cried, "you are in a deplorable situation. Collect your thoughts and remember that if the law of men is inflexible, there still remains for you the mercy of God. This you can merit by confessing your crime."

These words stunned me like a blow from a hammer. I fell back with extended arms, crying:

"Ah! what a terrible dream!"

And I fainted.

When I regained consciousness, the carriage was rolling slowly down the street; another one preceded us. The two officers were always with me. One of them on the way offered a pinch of snuff to his companion; mechanically I reached out my hand toward the snuff-box, but he withdrew it quickly.

My cheeks reddened with shame, and I turned away my head to conceal my emotion.

"If you look outside," said the man with the snuff-box, "we shall be obliged to put handcuffs on you."

"May the devil strangle you, you infernal scoundrel!" I said to myself. And as the carriage now stopped, one of them got out, while the other held me by the collar; then, seeing that his comrade was ready to receive me, he pushed me rudely out to him.

These infinite precautions to hold possession of my person boded no good; but I was far from perceiving the seriousness of the accusation that hung over my head until an alarming circumstance opened my eyes and threw me into despair.

They pushed me along a low alley, the pavement of which was unequal and broken; along the wall there ran a yellowish ooze, exhaling a fetid odor. I walked down this dark place with the two men behind me. A little further there appeared the chiaroscuro of an interior courtyard.

I grew more and more terror-stricken as I advanced. It was no natural feeling; it was a poignant anxiety, outside of nature—like a nightmare. I recoiled instinctively at each step.

"Go on!" cried one of the policemen, laying his hand on my shoulder. "Go on!" And on, reluctantly, I went.

But what was my astonishment when, at the end of the passage, I saw the courtyard that I had drawn the night before, with its walls furnished with hooks, its rubbish-heap of old iron, its chicken-coops, and its rabbit-hutch. Not a dormer window, high or low, not a broken pane, not the slightest detail had been omitted.

I was thunderstruck by this strange revelation.

Near the well were the two judges, Van Spreckdal and Richter. At their feet lay the old woman extended on her back, her long, thin, gray hair, her blue face, her eyes wide open, and her tongue between her teeth.

It was a horrible spectacle!

"Well," said Van Spreckdal, with solemn accents, "what have you to say?"

I did not reply.

"Do you remember having thrown this woman, Theresa Becker, into this well, after having strangled her to rob her of her money?"

"No," I cried, "no! I do not know this woman: I never saw her before. May God help me!"

"That will do," he replied in a dry voice. And without saying another word he went out with his companion.

The officers now believed that they had best put handcuffs on me. They took me back to the Raspehhaus, in a state of profound stupidity. I did not know what to think; my conscience itself troubled me; I even asked myself if I really had murdered the old woman!

In the eyes of the officers I was condemned.

I will not tell you of my emotions that night in the Raspehhaus, when, seated on my straw bed with the window opposite me and the gallows in perspective, I heard the watchmen cry in the silence of the night: "Sleep, people of Nuremberg; the Lord watches over you. One o'clock! Two o'clock! Three o'clock!"

Every one may form his own idea of such a night. There is a fine saying that it is better to be hanged innocent than guilty. For the soul, yes; but for the body, it makes no difference; on the contrary, it kicks, it curses its lot, it tries to escape, knowing well enough that its rôle ends with the rope. Add to this, that it repents not having sufficiently enjoyed life, and at having listened to the soul when it preached abstinence.

"Ah! if I had only known!" my body cried, "you would not have led me about by a string with your big words, your beautiful phrases, and your magnificent sentences! You would not have allured me with your fine promises. I should have had many happy moments that are now lost forever. Everything is over! You said to me: 'Control your passions.' Very well! I did control them. Here I am now! They are going to hang me, and you—later they will speak of you as a sublime soul, a stoical soul, a martyr to the errors of Justice. They will never think about me!"

Such were the sad reflections of my poor body.

Day broke; at first, dull and undecided, it threw an uncertain light on my bull's-eye window with its cross-bars; then it blazed against the wall at the back. Outside, the street became lively. This was a market-day; it was Friday. I heard the vegetable wagons pass and also the country people with their baskets. Some chickens cackled in their coops in passing and some butter sellers chattered together. The market opposite opened, and they began to arrange the stalls.

Finally, it was broad daylight and the vast murmur of the increasing crowd, housekeepers who assembled with baskets on their arms, coming and going, discussing and marketing, told me that it was eight o'clock.

With the light, my heart gained a little courage. Some of my black thoughts disappeared. I desired to see what was going on outside.

Other prisoners before me had managed to climb up to the bull's-eye; they had dug some holes in the wall to mount

more easily. I climbed in my turn, and, when seated in the oval edge of the window, with my legs bent and my head bowed, I could see the crowd, and all the life and movement. Tears ran freely down my cheeks. I thought no longer of suicide. I experienced a need to live and breathe, which was really extraordinary.

"Ah!" I said, "to live, what happiness! Let them harness me to a wheelbarrow—let them put a ball and chain around my leg—nothing matters if I may only live!"

The old market, with its roof shaped like an extinguisher, supported on heavy pillars, made a superb picture: old women seated before their panners of vegetables, their cages of poultry and their baskets of eggs; behind them the Jews, dealers in old clothes, their faces the color of old box-wood; butchers with bare arms, cutting up meat on their stalls; countrymen, with large hats on the backs of their heads, calm and grave, tranquilly smoking their pipes, with their hands behind their backs and resting on their sticks of hollywood.

Then the tumult and noise of the crowd—those screaming, shrill, grave, high, and short words—those expressive gestures—those sudden attitudes that show from a distance the progress of a discussion and depict so well the character of the individual—in short, all this captivated my mind, and notwithstanding my sad condition, I felt happy to be still of the world.

Now, while I looked about in this manner, a man—a butcher—passed, inclining forward and carrying an enormous quarter of beef on his shoulders; his arms were bare, his elbows were raised upward and his head was bent under them. His long hair, like that of Savior's Sicambrian, hid his face from me; and yet, at the first glance, I trembled.

"It is he!" I said.

All the blood in my body rushed to my heart. I got down from the window trembling to the ends of my fingers, feeling my cheeks quiver, and the pallor spread over my face, stammering in a choked voice:

"It is he! He is there—there—and I, I have to die to expiate his crime. Oh, God! what shall I do? What shall I do?"

A sudden idea, an inspiration from Heaven, flashed across my mind. I put my hand in the pocket of my coat—my box of crayons was there!

Then rushing to the wall, I began to trace the scene of the murder with superhuman energy. No uncertainty, no hesitation! I knew the man! I had seen him! He was there before me!

At ten o'clock the jailor came to my cell. His owl-like impassibility gave place to admiration.

"Is it possible?" he cried, standing at the threshold.

"Go bring me my judges," I said to him, pursuing my work with an increasing exultation.

Schlüssel answered:

"They are waiting for you in the trial-room."

"I wish to make a revelation," I cried, as I put the finishing touches to the mysterious personage.

He lived; he was frightful to see. His full-faced figure, foreshortened upon the wall, stood out from the white background with an astonishing vitality.

The jailor went away.

A few minutes afterward the two judges appeared. They were stupefied. I, trembling, with extended hand, said to them:

"There is the murderer!"

After a few moments of silence, Van Spreckdal asked me:

"What is his name?"

"I don't know; but he is at this moment in the market; he is cutting up meat in the third stall to the left as you enter from Traub's Street."

"What do you think?" said he, leaning toward his colleague.

"Send for the man," he replied in a grave tone.

Several officers retained in the corridor obeyed this order. The judges stood, examining the sketch. As for me, I had dropped on my bed of straw, my head between my knees, perfectly exhausted.

Soon steps were heard echoing under the archway. Those who have never awaited the hour of deliverance and counted the minutes, which seem like centuries—those who have never experienced the sharp emotions of outrage, terror, hope, and doubt—can have no conception of the inward chills that I experienced at that moment. I should have distinguished the step of the murderer, walking between the guards, among a thousand others. They approached. The judges themselves seemed moved. I raised up my head, my heart feeling as if an iron hand had clutched it, and I fixed my eyes upon the closed door. It opened. The man entered. His cheeks were red and swollen, the muscles in his large contracted jaws twitched as far as his ears, and his little restless eyes, yellow, like a wolf's, gleamed beneath his heavy yellowish red eyebrows.

Van Spreckled showed him the sketch in silence.

Then that murderous man, with the large shoulders, having looked, grew pale—then, giving a roar which thrilled us all with terror, he waved his enormous arms, and jumped backward to overthrow the guards. There was a terrible struggle in the corridor; you could hear nothing but the panting breath of the butcher, his muttered imprecations, and the short words and the shuffling feet of the guard, upon the flagstones.

This lasted only about a minute.

Finally the assassin re-entered, with his head hanging down, his eyes bloodshot, and his hands fastened behind his back. He looked again at the picture of the murderer; he seemed to reflect, and then, in a low voice, as if talking to himself:

"Who could have seen me," he said, "at midnight?"
I was saved!

MANY years have passed since that terrible adventure. Thank Heaven! I make silhouettes no longer, nor portraits of burgomasters. Through hard work and perseverance, I have won my place in the world, and I earn my living honorably by painting works of art—the sole end, in my opinion, to which a true artist should aspire. But the memory of that nocturnal sketch has always remained in my mind. Sometimes, in the midst of work, the thought of it recurs. Then I lay down my palette and dream for hours.

How could a crime committed by a man that I did not know—at a place that I had never seen—have been reproduced by my pencil, in all its smallest details?

Was it chance? No! And moreover, what is chance but the effect of a cause of which we are ignorant?

Was Schiller right when he said: "The immortal soul does not participate in the weaknesses of matter; during the sleep of the body, it spreads its radiant wings and travels, God knows where! What it then does, no one can say, but inspiration sometimes betrays the secret of its nocturnal wanderings."

Who knows? Nature is more audacious in her realities than man in his most fantastic imaginings.

Was This a Vampire?

APARENTLY, belief in the vampire, most gruesome of ghosts, still persists, for an effort was recently made to lay one of them by the ancient method of driving a stake through the heart of a corpse.

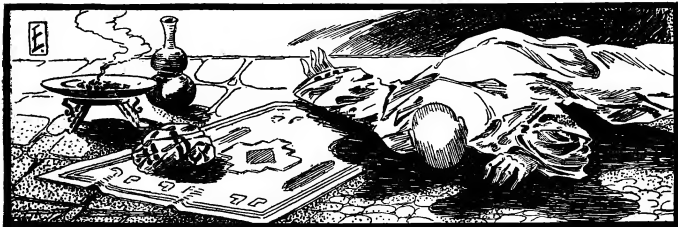
On a lonely farm in a wild portion of Long Island's north shore district, about eight miles from the thriving town of Huntington, lies a small graveyard, neglected and overrun with weeds. Here, in August, 1857, seventy-two years ago, was buried George Franks, a young farmer. His wife, Lucy, was laid to rest at his side in 1874. Since then no bodies have been interred there, and the graves have been almost obliterated by the dense underbrush.

The cemetery, along with several farms in the vicinity, was purchased not long ago by Ernest A. Bigelow, a New York man, as part of a great tract of land upon which he contemplates establishing an estate. Recently Talman Bigelow, son of the purchaser, and Captain Arthur Argles, R. A. F., a British war ace, made a tour of the land. In their wanderings, they came to the cemetery, with its twenty-odd graves, and were amazed to find that Franks' had been opened, apparently within the week. Fresh earth was piled on either side of a hole three feet deep. But what startled

the two men most was a hardwood stake that had been driven into the earth at the bottom of the hole—where the heart of the dead man would be. Obviously, the deed had been done by one who believed the corpse to be possessed by a vampire.

According to tradition, the blood-sucking ghost, or vampire, wanders about at night, preying on human beings and live stock and sucking the blood from their veins. Furthermore, it was believed that the only way a vampire could be laid was to drive a stake through the heart of the body from which it had sprung.

A POLICE investigation failed to reveal the despoiler of Franks' grave or any reason for the outrage. The only explanation possible was that live stock belonging to some resident along the north shore had died from some mysterious cause and that their owner had resorted to the vampire expedient, hoping to save the remainder of his cattle. But why the grave of Franks had been selected, no one could surmise, unless the vandal labored under the mistaken idea that any corpse would serve his purpose, and that by molesting a grave in the abandoned cemetery he could perform his gruesome deed without discovery.



Howard Thurston, *the World-Famous Magician*,
master of the occult mysteries of India,
has discovered true cases of the most
amazing phenomena on record—

Ghosts of the LIVING

—real apparitions whose
human forms have not
yet ceased to live!

DURING a lifetime devoted to mystery, it has been my good fortune to encounter many remarkable phenomena that may be classed as unexplainable. I have studied hundreds of cases of haunted houses, apparitions and ghostly manifestations; and while many involved hallucination or mere imagination, I found numerous instances in which the reports were clear, well substantiated by reliable persons and stated in a convincing manner.

It was my plan to classify all such cases: to find points of similarity between them, treating the subject in a purely scientific manner. After eliminating all reports that were not well supported by reliable testimony, I divided the remainder into three classes: reported ghosts of unknown persons; apparitions that were vaguely recognized by various witnesses but were not definitely identified as individuals whom they had seen in life; and finally, visions of persons whom the beholders had previously known.

In studying this last group, I made a startling discovery. The statements indicated that people had not only reported ghosts of the dead, but that they had actually seen ghosts of the living!

Since that time I have personally investigated a number of cases in which specters have been positively identified, although the human forms which they represented had not yet ceased to live! In every instance of this nature, however, there was some unusual circumstance which accounted for the apparition.

There are other cases on record of persons who have entered the state of death, yet have returned to life. This may be a trance condition, or what is known as suspended animation. In some instances, the people have actually been pronounced dead by physicians.

One investigator has reported five hundred and eighty



Howard Thurston is known to every theatergoer in America for his incredible feats of magic. He has recorded—for GHOST STORIES exclusively—the most astounding spectral manifestations that have come within his personal knowledge

cases of this sort. Among them is the story of Anne Carter Lee, the mother of General Robert E. Lee, who apparently died in October, 1805, and who was laid to rest in the family mausoleum. Seven days after the supposed death, an elderly sexton who was bringing flowers into the burial-place fancied he heard a voice from the tomb. He was frightened and left the vault, hastening to inform members of the family. They entered the mausoleum and discovered that the woman was still alive. She recovered completely from this weird experience, which occurred two years before the birth of Robert E. Lee.

THERE are many other incidents quite as remarkable as this: historic cases which have conclusively proven that there is an intermediate state between life and death—namely, that of suspended animation—which occurs much more frequently than is generally supposed.

In India, for example, there are Hindus who not only claim the power to assume the state of death, but have frequently demonstrated it. One of the most celebrated cases occurred in the year 1837, when the yogi, Hariadas, was confined underground for forty days, the experiment being conducted under the supervision of Sir Claude Wade and the Rajah Runjeet Singh.

"*Samahdi*" is the name given to this strange power. It appears to be a self-induced state of catalepsy—more power-

ful than hypnosis, although through hypnosis I have often made similar demonstrations with Hindu subjects, burying them for considerable periods of time. But in the self-induced *samahdi*, the yogi usually stipulates the length of his burial period.

In the annals of ghosts, the theory exists that an ethereal form is freed from the body after death, and can make itself evident and visible. The Hindus believe that this action also transpires during the *samahdi*, but that the freed form is later able to resume its place in the body. This is something that psychic investigators have had little opportunity to study, because cases of suspended animation are comparatively rare, even in India. Yet the question is intriguing. People say they have seen the ghosts of those who have passed on. Have any of them seen the ghosts of those who have not passed on, but are suspended in this strange state that is neither life nor death?

Yes. I shall give the instances which have been told to me as actual cases. All have been at least partially corroborated by more than one person, and I am convinced that my informants were absolutely sincere. These instances stand as some of the most remarkable accounts of ghostly visitations that have ever been recorded.



IN India I made the acquaintance of several native gentlemen who were firm believers in the occult powers of the yogi. They claimed to have witnessed many unusual exhibitions, and told me the strange story of the yogi who was buried in Delhi about the year 1900.

This man declared that he would actually become dead for a period of eight days. Such an announcement was enough to bring thousands of fanatics from every city in India, and those in charge had great difficulty in keeping away the crowds of natives.

They finally decided that the exact spot of the burial should be kept a secret from all except a chosen few, and they set the time for several weeks in the future. Most of the curious went away when they learned that the *samahdi* would not take place for some time; others waited patiently, believing that they would be informed of the event.

The exact whereabouts of the yogi was also kept a secret, and while the populace of Delhi speculated, the men in charge carried the yogi to a secluded spot outside the city limits, and buried him. They kept careful watch over the grave, and took every precaution to see that no one approached.

When on the fourth day of the entombment, they heard a rumor that the celebrated yogi had been seen in Bombay, the guards were highly pleased. This report, they felt sure, would discourage all the interested natives who were still waiting in Delhi.

The rumors persisted, and by the sixth day had become so convincing that the guards began to wonder if they really had the yogi underground. He had been seen in Bombay—not once, but at least half a dozen times, and not only by natives, but by Europeans. The yogi had made his appearance suddenly, after nightfall. He had been recognized, but had not spoken to anyone; and he had disappeared as mysteriously as he had arrived.

So when the eighth day arrived, the watchers at the grave were doubled. There was no need to guard against outsiders, for by this time it was common knowledge in Delhi that the yogi had gone to Bombay. Every precaution was taken at the disinterment, and many reliable witnesses were present. Most of them expected to see an empty coffin, firmly believing that the yogi had managed to get away.

But when the box was opened, the man was inside, pale and motionless, as in death. After about an hour spent in reviving him, he opened his eyes, and a little while later he was quite alive, although weak.

The *samahdi* had again been a success. But the mystery

that perplexed the witnesses in Delhi was something they had not anticipated. Who had been seen in Bombay?

Several people who knew the facts admitted that they were doubtful about the reports from Bombay. They said that people there might well have seen a man who resembled the yogi.

But I talked with three men who were witnesses at the opening of the yogi's grave, and through them I interviewed a fourth, a native named Ganguly, who claimed to have seen the yogi in Bombay. Someone had shown him the holy man upon the latter's first mysterious appearance there. Ganguly had left for Delhi the next day, and had arrived there before the disinterment. He knew some of those in charge of the burial, and had been fortunate enough to arrive at the scene before the yogi was removed from the ground.

Ganguly was positive that the buried yogi was the very man whom he had seen in Bombay; he even recognized the garments in which the holy man was clad. The other three witnesses were equally convinced that Ganguly had seen the yogi in Bombay, and that the holy man had manifested himself there in order to astonish the natives.

A wealthy native of Calcutta told me of a similar instance. A yogi had come to his house occasionally, to receive gifts. Then the holy man had gone north, to the country from which he came. Two weeks later he entered the room where the Calcutta man was sitting, gazed at him intently for a full minute, and then left, with neither greeting nor farewell. The Calcutta man was amazed. But, convinced of the yogi's occult powers, he felt sure that he had seen a ghostly manifestation. He inquired in Calcutta, and made sure that the yogi had actually left the city. Then he wrote to a friend in northern India, to inquire about the holy man. A few weeks later he received a reply which stated that the yogi was in northern India, and that he had just completed a term of *samahdi*. This Calcutta man, like Ganguly, was convinced that he had seen the ghost of a man who was still alive!

Yet the strangest records of ghosts of the living are not confined to India. I know of authentically reported cases in America which are more astounding than those I have just related.

ABOUT twelve years ago, a young woman named Cynthia Martin was living in a suburb of Philadelphia. She had a twin brother named Roger, who was in Chicago. Between them, as is often the case with twins, there seemed to be a peculiar bond, even when they were apart. On several occasions Cynthia had experienced pain when her brother was ill, though she was not aware of his sickness; but she had never imagined that he was present.

One night she awoke and seemed to sense that there was someone in the room. She was not frightened, for she felt that the presence was friendly, and her thoughts unaccountably turned to Roger. As she listened, she fancied that she heard her brother whisper her name.

The room was very dark, so she reached to the window at one side of her bed, and raised the shade, flooding the room with moonlight. As she turned back, she saw her brother standing beside her bed.

"Why are you here, Roger?" she asked.

"I can't be with you long," he whispered.

She noticed that his face was very pale, and she was uneasy. So she stepped out of bed, on the side by the window, and walked around the foot of the bed; but when she reached the spot where Roger had been, she was amazed to find him gone.

The door of the room was locked, so that he could not have left; and Cynthia was certain that she could not have been dreaming, for she had been awake several minutes be-

fore she had raised the window-shade. She was extremely troubled, and found it impossible to go back to sleep. Finally she sent a telegram to her brother's address in Chicago.

In the morning a reply came from a friend, telling her that Roger was well, but needed her. She went west on the first train, to find her brother very ill, but on the road to recovery. The nurse told her that he had lapsed into a state of coma after a sudden illness, two nights before, and that for several hours they had believed him dead. This period corresponded exactly with the hour of Cynthia's vision.

Roger Martin, in telling of his experience, could remember nothing definite after having lapsed into unconsciousness; but he recalled that upon waking he was thinking of his sister, and that he was sure he had seen her a short while before.

Even more remarkable is the story which was sent to me eight years ago by a friend from California. The facts of this case were as follows:

A man named Benjamin Gough, who lived in Ohio, was subject to trance spells. The first occurred when he was about sixteen years old, in the year 1880. A physician declared that the young man was dead, but the boy's mother would not believe it. She attributed the cataleptic state to the result of a severe illness from which the youth had recently recovered. Her theory seemed to be correct, too, for Benjamin came to life a few hours after the doctor had pronounced him dead.

In 1884, Gough suffered from a similar attack, and his mother was again sure he was alive. On this occasion, he recovered before the attending physician was willing to make a definite statement that he was dead.

Seven years elapsed, during which Gough enjoyed excellent health. He traveled

She went to the door of the room and peered into the lighted hall. Disappointed, she came back.

"He's not there," she said, "but I'm sure I heard him. Something has happened to him—and I don't know where he is."

Mrs. Gough stayed awake all that night, worrying. She told her niece of the two previous occurrences, and said that she had experienced the same sensation that she had known twice before.

A week or so later, a letter arrived from Benjamin, saying that he had been taken ill in a hotel in Springfield, Illinois. He had failed to respond to an early morning call, and the hotel people had come to his room. They had found him, apparently dead. A doctor had been summoned, and had voiced the same opinion. But when the undertaker arrived, he discovered that Gough was breathing. The young man recovered that same day, and was well enough to leave the city the following morning.

Two years later, Mrs. Matthews and Mrs. Gough were driving in a carriage. They had just left a friend at her home, so that Mrs. Matthews was in the front seat with the driver and her aunt was alone in back.

MRS. MATTHEWS heard Mrs. Gough talking in a low voice, and turned around. Her aunt was looking toward the empty seat in the carriage, and was nodding her head while she spoke in a low murmur. Mrs. Matthews was puzzled, but said nothing. Finally the talking ceased, and her niece noted that Mrs. Gough was dozing. This alarmed her, so she had the coachman stop while she moved to the back seat and awakened Mrs. Gough.

Her aunt seemed dazed, and looked at her curiously.

"Where is Benjamin?" asked Mrs. Gough.

"Benjamin is not here," replied her niece.

"He was here a moment ago—right beside me," the other insisted. "I was talking to him, and he answered me—but he must have gone away."

Mrs. Gough could not recall her exact conversation with her son, but distinctly remembered his presence, and was reluctant to admit that she had been the victim of a delusion. This time she knew where Benjamin was, so she sent a telegram to the Cincinnati address he had given her, and received a reply stating that he was writing to explain.

In the letter, Benjamin said that he had fallen while standing in a trolley car and that people had thought him dead. He had been hurried to a hospital where he had regained consciousness, the trance being of about two hours duration.

There is no record of Mrs. Gough's

considerably, and so his mother moved to California, where she lived with her niece,

Mrs. Lloyd Matthews who supplied these facts.

In the fall of 1891, Mrs. Gough and Mrs. Matthews were seated one evening in the living room of their home. The younger woman was talking when Mrs. Gough held up her hand as a command for silence. "Listen!" she said. "There's someone in the hall."

Mrs. Matthews could hear nothing, but her aunt insisted that someone was there. Suddenly she exclaimed, "It's Benjamin! I know his footstep! He's come to surprise me!"

experiences between 1893 and 1904. But in June of the latter year, she came to her niece one morning, very pale and worried.

"I saw Benjamin last night," she said. "I have seen him before, and it doesn't frighten me now. But last night was different, and I am worried." (Continued on page 92)



ONE into the

*What did the weird
vision mean?
Was some stranger des-
tined to kill himself in
payment for my folly?*

By ROSS A.



I would have given anything in the world to stop him! But I could not move a muscle

THE other men in the office had all gone home, and the clattering of the scrubwomen was diminishing as they finished cleaning the other rooms. Still I sat at my desk behind the glass door marked *Treasurer*, trying to decide whether to be an honest man or an embezzler.

It was the last day of my service in the branch office of the great public utility company in Lakehurst. My promotion, and a transfer, had finally come through, and a new *Branch Treasurer* was already on his way to replace me. Another young man would take up my work where I left it. Another young man would be exposed to the temptation of handling a great deal of other people's money. . . .

I had no need to worry as far as the world was concerned. I firmly believed that not even a Certified Public Accountant could find anything wrong with my books. Yet I, and I alone, knew that twenty-five hundred dollars of the firm's money was in my hands.

As I sat in that unlighted office, nervously smoking cigarette after cigarette, my mind went back over the five years we had spent in the lovely suburban town of Lakehurst. The company had sent me here from Chicago on my first big job for them. It was a considerable rise from my previous post as assistant cashier and for the first time in my life I found myself entrusted with sums of money beyond anything I had ever dreamed of handling.

The salary had seemed munificent in the beginning. It was three times what I had been getting in Chicago. Cora and I had married on the strength of it.

We were very happy, particularly at first. Most of the Lakehurst people were at least moderately wealthy, and we found ourselves accepted, by virtue of my position as chief executive of the power company, into the charmed circle of society. Like many women who have no idea of money values, Cora had an intuitive social sense, and before her beauty and personality a new world opened out.

It went well enough at first, though I used to protest sometimes at being dragged out in the evening after

a grueling day in the office. But Cora had her way, almost always.

Then we began to accumulate unpaid debts. My salary was raised once or twice a year, but it never came anywhere near equaling the advance in our standard of living. We used to talk sometimes about saving money, but we rarely managed to get anything ahead; and if we did, there was always a place to put it.

One day I came home from the office with a look on my face which must have frightened my wife, for she sent the maid from the room. I faced her, my bank statement for the month in my hand.

"Ross! Whatever is the matter?"

"Matter enough," I said. "Do you know that we are overdrawn at the bank?"

She shrugged her shoulders.

"Is that all?" she said relieved. "Well, it's not the first time, is it? Your check comes this week—"

"No, it's not the first time," I told her. "It's the fourth time in five months. The bank will be asking me to close my account there, and soon, too. That'll be a pretty pass for a man who handles other people's money!"

"But, Ross, you're making a good deal out of nothing! You know George Herbert would never do a thing like that. He's a friend of yours—"

"YES, and he's cashier of the bank, too. What will he, and all the others, think of a man who can't live on his income? If the firm hadn't given us a bonus at Christmas time, we'd be absolutely penniless. As it is, we've got to retrench!"

A funny look came over Cora's face, as if she didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

"It won't be so bad, honey," I told her. "We'll just go tight for a while till we catch up again."

"But I wasn't thinking of that," she said. "I—I knew you wouldn't mind if I spent some of the bonus; so I went shopping today with Greta Herbert and Margaret. and—and—I bought a mink coat."

"Another coat? You've got a couple of them already, haven't you?" I lit a cigarette. "How much did it cost?"

She laughed nervously. "It—you see. . . . Well, it was such a bargain, Ross. You see, with spring coming they—they cut, the price from—from fifteen hundred to a thousand."

FLASH Future

*An astounding story of
a young treasurer's
temptation—
and of his battle with
his own soul*

BANCROFT



The muzzle of the gun was pressed against his temple!

"A thousand dollars for a coat?" My jaw dropped.

She nodded. "I've always wanted one, Ross. It seemed such a bargain, and I knew if you once saw it on me you'd want me to have it."

Without waiting for me to say anything, she flew into her bedroom, and in a moment she came out, wrapped in a coat of rich brown fur that was wonderfully becoming. She paraded back and forth in front of me, and then dropped down at my side.

I shook my head determinedly.

"Honey, it has to go back," I told her firmly. "Don't even wait till morning—send it back tonight. Why, it's impossible!"

"But—but, Ross, I can't send it back! It was such a bargain, and I had to snatch it right then—or lose it! Greta wanted it herself, and—"

"But why can't you send it back?"

"Because I paid for it! The money was in our joint account—the bonus money, you know. And I wrote the man a check right there. . . ."

I slumped down in my chair. My wife had spent every cent—and more—of the money we had in the world! I had already drawn on the bonus to pay our household expenses that month, and in the morning there would be a shortage at the bank—perhaps nearly a thousand dollars!

It was then that I made my first great mistake. If I had talked frankly to Cora right then, explaining our exact financial condition, it might have changed everything. But I had always been rather proud of her lack of worldiness, and of the fact that she understood so little about money.

So, instead of insisting that something be done about the coat, I simply went out for a walk, leaving my wife alone.

Slowly I paced the boulevard in front of our apartment house. My monthly check from the company was due in a few days, certainly by the tenth. That would cover the shortage at the bank, even if it did leave us very little to live on during the next thirty days. Of course, I could borrow. . . .

Then I recollected several little things that had slipped my mind. A couple of notes of mine had been running at the bank for nearly a year, one of them caused by Cora's

illness and the other by our vacations the previous summer. And there were other small indebtednesses. . . .

Perhaps the bank would send back Cora's check to the furrier, marked "Insufficient Funds." In that case, the coat would have to be returned; but there would still be an unpleasant situation for both myself and the bank. . . . What would George Herbert, and the other officers think?

No, I knew what they would do. They would hold the check, and telephone me to come down and make good on it. It would be perfectly O. K. with them—as long as I paid the thousand dollars right away!

Otherwise—the swift whisper of scandal, which would run through the small town like wildfire. Cora and I would be socially ostracized. The well-to-do have no sympathy for financial four-flushers!

If only I could get a thousand dollars at once! But I had nothing on which to raise that much money. . . .

I went back home, but avoided the subject of money all evening. Instead of letting Cora see in just what sort of situation we were, I kept quiet.

"It'll be all right, honey," I told her the next morning as I left for the office. "Don't worry your pretty little head about money."

But I worried a good deal as I sat in my office and waited for the telephone call which I knew would come from the bank that forenoon.

There seemed no way out, unless the bank would lend me more money. But I hadn't yet made good my promise to clear up those two notes!

ABOUT eleven o'clock the telephone rang, and George Herbert's voice came over the wire. Did I imagine it, or was his tone a little distant?

"Got a check of your wife's, Ross," he said, "on top of the overdraft at the end of the month. What do you want me to do with it?"

"Oh, yes." I thought rapidly. "She told me about it. . . ."

"Well, do you want to send the money down by messenger? Or will you drop in?"

I made an instant decision. I knew that my pay check

would come through in a few days, and I could fix everything up then. And on the desk in front of me was twenty-five hundred dollars in cash, awaiting deposit for the firm.

"Send over for the money, will you?" I asked the cashier of Lakehurst's biggest bank. "I'll make a deposit to my personal account of twenty-five hundred. Will that take care of the overdraft?"

"O.K.," came George's voice. "It'll cover it, and—let's see—leave you nearly a thousand. Unless you want to take up those two notes that have been hanging fire..."

"I might as well go the whole way," I said to myself. And to George—"Sure, we might as well get those cleared off. Take the notes and the overdraft out of the money I'm sending down..."

As I hung up the receiver I was thunderstruck at what I had done. I had only meant to borrow a thousand until my pay check came in. And now I had paid off the two notes, and was in the hole for more than twice my monthly check!

STILL, I knew that I could take my time in paying off the money now, as no one but myself knew that we had had the cash on hand. It was an unusual situation; but in the office of Branch Treasurer our company combined the financial and executive posts. I alone could order work done, pay for it and judge it afterward. It was only too easy for me to cover up the whole proceeding with an entry in my ledger for expenditures totaling twenty-five hundred dollars.

Of course, I meant to repay the money at the first opportunity. But things, somehow, didn't seem to get any better. Cora never mentioned the subject of the money again, though I suppose she tried, in her haphazard way, to cut down on the household expenses. But in a month or two we were in arrears as before. I saved, when I could, and once I had nearly half the necessary amount. But it would be safest to replace the entire sum at one time, and something always came up to make me fall short of the full amount.

A year went by, and I realized that the auditor had gone over my accounts without noticing anything out of the way. It was a break that could occur only once in a lifetime, but now my secret was safe. The whole proceeding was so simple that it had passed without the breath of suspicion.

It was a good thing, in a way. For I was less able to make restitution that next year than ever. A thousand things came up to demand the expenditure of every cent I made. Still, I was not entirely happy, for always I had the thought in the back of my mind: "The money must be repaid."

Then, at the end of my fifth year of service, I was notified that the death of our Branch Manager in Indiana had left a much higher post open for me. Cora and I prepared to move at once.

"Let's sell our furniture and the car here," she had suggested. "It would cost a lot to move, and we need new things anyway. Or perhaps we can get a place furnished..."

So it was arranged that the old roadster and our furniture should be sold. And when the deal was put through, I was shocked to find that the amount which resulted was exactly twenty-five hundred dollars! It seemed like a direct admonition from Fate.

Thus it happened that I sat in my office that evening, debating what to do. I could no longer offer the excuse of previous months. In my pocket I had a roll of bills from the man who had purchased our belongings, and around the bills was a wrapper which bore the telltale fig-

ures \$2500.00. For once I had the opportunity and the means of becoming an honest man again. The restitution could easily be covered up, and no one would ever be the wiser....

So I thought, as I rested my head in my hands. But how could I explain to Cora? She would wonder what had happened to the money from the sale of our things. And she would have to go through a period of the utmost financial stringency for the first few months of our life in the new city.

I reminded myself that the corporation was large and grasping. I knew of certain instances in which it had forced small operators to the wall and practically stolen their holdings.

"After all," I said to myself, "if I simply do the sensible things and say nothing about this, everything will be infinitely better. I've earned the money for the firm a dozen times over..."

I crushed out the last of my cigarettes, and stood up to go. My decision was made. The past was buried—let it rest! I could make a new and better start in Indiana, and forget the little sum I had appropriated. My conscience lulled by such self-delusions, I cleared up my desk for the last time and went to the coat rack in the corner to get my hat.

It was dark in my office, though some light filtered through the glass door which led to the outer office. I did not trouble to switch on the light, but fumbled for my hat. When I turned toward the door, I stopped short in amazement.

Although I had heard no one enter in the brief moment that my back was turned, there at my desk sat a young man!

I rubbed my eyes stupidly, waiting for the hallucination to pass. For I knew that the outer door had been locked an hour or two before, and that only two men in the firm carried keys like mine. This young man was an utter stranger to me. Enough light came through the glass to tell me that.

I STOOD against the wall, unable to move. Was this a thief? Hardly. Burglars do not act as he did. I wanted to ask him who he was, and demand an accounting of his presence at my desk. But my vocal cords were curiously paralyzed, and I could not make a sound.

Straining my eyes through the dimness, I saw that my visitor seemed a little misty, like a blurred photograph. There was nothing definite about him at all—in fact, he seemed to be made of dark, heavy smoke, that continually swirled and eddied and changed. But the details were there, if I could only see them.

Not for a moment did I consider the supernatural. I reasoned that I must have been overworking—that my

eyes must be playing me tricks—or else that my nerves were on the blink. But the vision, if it *was* a vision, remained.

I stood and watched. There was nothing else to do. The man paid no attention to me at all. He seemed to be engrossed in making hurried notations and entries in a great red book which I recognized as the office ledger. But the ledger was locked fast in the safe!

There was a worried, intense look on the young man's face, and his fingers moved faster and faster as he scratched with the pen.

Now and then he would stop to consult a notebook in his pocket, and then make erasures and new entries. I strained my eyes, trying to make out what he was doing. Unconsciously, I moved a little closer. I was near enough now



to peer over his shoulder, but he never looked up at me.

A dim, eerie light seemed to play over the surface of the book in which he was writing. Then, suddenly, the whole thing was clear to me. The young man was trying to cover up a long series of embezzlements. And he was falsifying old entries in the hope of making his accounts look right!

The whole thing struck me with particular emphasis because of the situation I was in. Here was a man going through, on a larger scale, what I had begun two years before. Here was a systematic effort to do what I had done!

I drew back, for the young man had risen. Without noticing me, he walked to the door, and went limping out into the outer office. I felt impelled to follow. A force stronger than my will led me on, though I could not interfere, even when I saw the stranger moving toward the great iron safe in the outer office.

Even in the light of the 100-watt lamps he did not seem more distinct. But I could make out clearly enough that it was an artificial limb which impeded his stride.

PARALYZED and horrified, I watched the young man work the secret combination of the safe. Then I saw him lean forward and replace the great ledger in the place we always kept it.

I stood in the door of my office and watched, without the slightest idea of what was to happen next. I saw the strange apparition take a black satchel from under its arm and fill it with several bundles of what looked like bank-notes. Yet I knew that there was actually only a small sum of money in the safe at the time.

When the bank-notes were all stowed away, the figure pulled the safe door shut with a hollow clang that still rings in my ears sometimes. Then it limped back to my office. I saw the man grab some papers from the desk and turn to leave. Even then I could not interfere. I knew, somewhere in the depths of my mind, that this was nothing human.

The next instant I saw the figure stop suddenly, and whirl like a trapped animal. The outer door was slowly opening!

My eyes were glued to the figure of the young man, yet I could see that the doorway was blank.

The satchel was dropped on the desk, and slowly—very slowly—the man put up his hands. He sank back into the chair, his face twisted with despair. Still nothing came through the outer door, which now hung half-open.

It seemed an eternity that the figure remained thus, though it must have been but a few seconds. Then, suddenly, one hand flew to a coat pocket, and came out with a shining revolver clutched in his fingers.

The gun was raised swiftly, until it pointed—not toward the open doorway—but until the muzzle was pressed against the young man's temple!

I held my breath. I would have given anything in the world to stop him! But I could not move a muscle.

There came a shattering crash, and slowly the young man toppled to the floor. The revolver fell beside him,

and a curl of blue smoke rose from its barrel. I seemed to smell the acrid tang of powder. . . .

At that moment my voice returned, and I shouted for help with all the power of my lungs. I remember nothing more. The walls seemed to swirl around me, and disappear.

I awoke to find the night watchman of the building standing beside me, holding a paper cup full of water to my lips. I was sitting in a chair in the inner office.

I pushed his arm away.

"Did you—did you see the body?" I managed to ask weakly.

"What body, Mr. Bancroft? I heard you cry out, and came here on the run. But I didn't see any body!"

I rose to my feet somewhat unsteadily, and went to the door. The outer office was still brilliantly illuminated, but there was no sign remaining of the dreadful scene I had just witnessed. No body lay crumpled in a pool of blood near a smoking revolver.

I struggled to get control of myself. Had I been dreaming? The watchman offered to call a taxicab for me.

"It's all right, John," I told him. "I've been working pretty hard lately, and I must have overdone it. I'll be all right in a few minutes."

"Can I help you downstairs, sir?"

I considered, then shook my head.

"I'm going home in a few minutes," I told him. "But I've something to do first, here in the office. Just wait in the hall outside, will you?" He nodded, and soon was gone.

I SAT down, and went over what had happened. Beyond doubt, I had been given a terrible warning. Some poor soul who had made a false step in the past had returned in spirit to keep me from repeating his crime and suffering the consequences. It must have taken place in this same office, too, for the scene had been re-enacted here, and the ledger had been unmistakably my own.

The wages of sin is death.

These words seemed to reverberate through my brain as I puzzled over what had happened.

It did not take me a moment to decide what to do. A man who would fly in the face of a warning such as I had received must be devoid of all common sense.

I opened the safe, and took down the red ledger. I half expected to see the erasures and changes in it which my ghostly visitor had made, but no, everything was as usual. It was but the work of a moment to make the new entry which restored me to the ranks of honest men once more. Then I took the twenty-five hundred dollars from my pocket, tore off the wrapper, and put the bills in an envelope, with a notation which I knew would explain their being in the safe. The clerks would find them in the morning, and accept my explanation without question. Such was the power of an executive when combined with that of treasurer. Firms are wiser nowadays.

My heart was lighter as I crossed the office and turned out the lights. I was still shaking from the powerful impression made on me by what I had seen, but for the first time in two years I knew what it meant to be myself, an

When a Man's Soul Is at Stake—

The \$2500 was already in his pocket. No one would know he had stolen it. But his conscience protested.

Then, while his soul struggled with greed, did some giant hand tear aside the veil between the worlds?

Don't miss Ross Bancroft's inspiring account of his remarkable experience.

honest man, again. I straightened my shoulders unconsciously.

"Are you feeling better now, Mr. Bancroft?" The watchman offered to help me as I stepped into the elevator.

I looked at him, and smiled. "John, I'm feeling better than I ever did before in my life!"

The next morning Cora and I left Lakehurst, left it forever. And not only did we leave behind us all the friends, both real and counterfeit, that we had made there, but we left behind the life we had been leading.

I had already decided that I must lose no time in telling Cora the whole story. All our trouble had come about through a lack of frankness and understanding between us, and I was resolved that history—in our case—should not repeat itself.

When she had heard the whole thing, I was surprised at the way Cora took it. She agreed with me perfectly—agreed that I had done right in replacing the money.

"We're leaving with a clean slate," she said to me, "and I promise that things will be different in the new place." She put her hand on my arm gently. "I understand about the money, Ross. It was mostly my fault. Thank God that the spirit of that poor man came back to you in time to save you last night—to save us both, for I was the guiltier."

THINGS were different in the new city. We avoided the old pitfalls, and carefully budgeted our expenses until we found on a firm foundation again. Like many other men after a crash, I was surprised at the practicality and sensibleness of my wife, now that she understood everything.

One evening, several months after we had left Lakehurst for the new job, Cora sat on the arm of my chair, looking pensively into the fire. I offered a penny for her thoughts.

"I'm thinking of that poor boy who killed himself so long ago," she told me. "I wonder when it really happened? Couldn't you write to the Chicago office and find out if such an incident ever happened at Lakehurst?"

I was surprised.

"But why, honey?" I asked curiously.

"I don't know. I have the strangest desire to know the whole story of that poor boy who walked with a limp. Perhaps I could write to his mother, or his sweetheart or someone. . . . I'd like to do something for them. His appearance that night changed the course of our lives, you know. . . ."

I did know. We had been closer and happier, much happier, since I confessed the whole story to her. And so that night I wrote a letter to a man I knew in the main office—the one man who would be sure to know if any scandal had ever occurred at Lakehurst or any other branch of the company. The red ledger I had seen was used, so far as I knew, only by officials of the firm.

I was careful in wording the letter, only asking the vice-president if he had ever heard of the suicide of a young man who had worked in one of our branches. I gave some reason or other—I forget what—for wanting to know.

It was more than a week before I got an answer, and Cora watched eagerly as I tore open the envelope.

"I wonder if it did really happen at Lakehurst?" she cried eagerly. "And if it did, why didn't the people we knew there mention it? Someone in the company might have told you. . . ."

But I was already reading the note from the company official.

I read it through hazily, and then skimmed it again. Slowly the terrible truth struck me, and I handed the letter to Cora without a word.

"What's the matter, Ross? Is it as bad as that? When did it happen?"

I motioned her to read it, and walked over to the window as she began, half-aloud:

"Dear Bancroft:

"I am very glad to inform you that to the best of my knowledge and belief, no suicide has ever taken place in any of the offices of this company."

She stopped, then, to look at me, puzzled, but my face urged her to finish the note.

"As for such a thing happening at Lakehurst in the past, you can see for yourself that that's impossible. The office has only been there for ten years, and only four men have been in charge of it. The first two are in the Chicago office with me as I write, you were the third and the present incumbent is the fourth."

Cora paused for breath and went on hurriedly:

"By the way, when you come to the August convention you must meet your successor at Lakehurst, Mr. Elwood Smith. Smith is new with the company, but he comes with the highest recommendations. I understand that the government gave him a couple of medals to recompense him for the leg he lost in France. At any rate, we think he's a fine addition to our personnel, and we hope he'll make the same kind of a record at Lakehurst that you did!"

That was all.

Cora let the letter fall from her nerveless fingers and stared at me across the room.

"Then it hasn't happened yet! The man who limps has just come to Lakehurst! And you saw the future instead of the past!"

I nodded. "So it seems to me. Can you offer any other suggestion? Don't say 'coincidence,' because there's a point beyond which coincidence cannot go."

She shook her head.

"I don't know what to think," she said. "I never heard of a ghost rising from the future. But who knows?"

We talked of nothing else after that, but we could come to no conclusion. There were more than a few young men in the Middle West who had been unfortunate enough to lose one leg. But to think that a young man with that handicap was even then sitting at my old desk in the Lakehurst office, just as I had seen him on that terrible night before we left. . . .

Late in the evening Cora brought up a new angle.

"Ross," she said, "can't we do something to prevent it? I mean, now that we know what is fated to happen to the man named Elwood Smith, can't we save him from disgrace and death, just as his spirit saved you?"

I thought about it.

BUT what could we say, or do? I asked finally. "If I tell anyone what happened that night, I'll be considered either a lunatic or a moron, and besides, the story of my dishonesty will come out—and probably all to no good."

"Couldn't you write to some one in the main office?"

I shook my head. They would simply think that I had gone crazy or was trying to get my successor into trouble.

Days passed into weeks, and weeks into months, and the news which I was dreading did not come from Lakehurst. But I felt as if I were living under the sword of Damocles, for I could not free my mind from the fact that the man who had saved my honor was, with every day, drawing nearer to a certain doom.

I would wake up in the night and think. . . . "Perhaps he's holding that revolver to his head now. Perhaps his finger is tightening around the trigger. Perhaps. . . ."

Inaction was the hardest part to hear. I wanted to go to Lakehurst and make sure that Elwood Smith was the person I had seen in my "vision"—or whatever it was. But I did not dare, for there was still a slim hope that Smith's being lame was only a coincidence, and that nothing would happen. Besides, what could I say? What could I do? The new man would only resent my butting

in on his affairs and think it an unwarrantable intrusion.

It is a terrible thing to sit quietly by and know that a fellow being is drawing closer and closer to tragedy. As time went on, I gave less and less attention to my work, but kept devising means to save Elwood Smith. But that they were all impossible, I knew even before I had discussed them with Cora.

I finally made my decision. There was only one thing I could do, and that was to write to the main office and make a suggestion. In the letter I criticized the company policy of giving a Branch Treasurer both financial and executive powers, pointing out, in a general way, some of the dangers of such procedure. I spent a good deal of time and thought over the plan of operation I suggested to replace the present system, solely in the hope that I might effect a policy change that would take the possibility of tragedy away from Elwood Smith.

It was about a year after I had left Lakehurst when I mailed in my suggestion, and for some time I heard nothing of it. I knew that such matters had to go through the usual red tape and official consideration, but I fervently hoped that this change might be made in time. It was a faint hope, but it was all I had.

THEN the letter came from the head office, congratulating me on the plan I had suggested, and announcing that it was to be put into effect at once. From that time on, branch offices were to be run jointly by an engineer and a treasurer, instead of by one man alone. Thus the effect I had hoped for would be brought about—Elwood Smith would be saved from any possibility of embezzlement and its awful consequences, simply because the major opportunity, the great temptation, would be removed!

The letter went on:

In accordance with the new system which we are adopting, you may expect Mr. Pierce Farwell to join you as your associate within a few days. Mr. Farwell will go over your books at that time. I take pleasure in adding that the 192—award for the most practical suggestion of the year will be voted you at the next director's meeting. The prize is, as you know, \$2,500.

"Twenty-five hundred dollars!" The sum struck me like a blow in the face. It was the sum of money which I had once repaid to the company. Fate had returned it to me!

"Cora!" I was jubilant. "The system is going to be put into effect at once, and I've won the award!"

"I don't care about the money," she said, "but I'm ever so happy that there's no more danger ahead of poor Elwood Smith. Now he won't have a chance to go wrong; there'll be a man in the office with him. . . ."

She looked at me with wide eyes. "You've done it! You've beaten Fate!"

A great weight had been removed from my shoulders,

and I felt that I could breathe deeply for the first time in years. I went through the next two or three days with my head in the clouds. The office work which had piled up in my worried days melted away before my energy.

I soon had everything ship-shape for the new colleague I expected. The books were in perfect order, and the office was running smoothly.

But a good deal of the time my mind was still in that other office. Back in Lakehurst, I kept thinking, a young man was being saved from himself and from his terrible doom. I had repaid the debt I owed to his spirit.

I returned home one night whistling merrily. I kissed Cora, who was waiting at the door, and tossed the evening paper on the hall table.

"Good news!" she announced. "There's a letter from the firm, and it crackles inside. I think it's your award check. . . ."

Excited as a child, I tore open the envelope. Sure enough, inside was a formal announcement that I had been granted twenty-five hundred dollars as a prize for my suggestion of the new plan of Branch Plant Operation.

I turned toward Cora, waving the check gaily. Then I let it slip from my fingers as I caught sight of her face. I thought she was going to faint, but she had strength enough to point at the newspaper which I had flung down, unread.

"Read it," she screamed. "Oh, my God, it's happened!" The notice was fairly brief, and only chance could have brought it to her attention. I read—

SUICIDE ON NORTH-SHORE

And though I guessed the rest, I read on. The date line was *Lakehurst*. Then:

Elwood A. Smith, local treasurer of the Utilities Company, committed suicide at nine p. m. yesterday evening, when surprised in his office by the night watchman of the building who was accompanied by an officer.

Police are of the opinion that Smith was caught in the act of escaping with the pay-roll. A black satchel was found beside him, filled with bills. In his pocket was a letter from a vice-president of the company announcing that his books would be supervised within a few days.

A complete investigation will be made at once of the accounts of the company. Elwood Smith was discharged from the United States army in October, 1920.

That was all. The very plan I had worked out to save Elwood Smith had precipitated his downfall!

I looked at Cora, and she at me.

"We thought—we thought we'd beaten Fate," she whispered.

The Curse of the Three

FIVE miles from Webster, Colorado, where a State highway and the Platte River part, there is a little clearing in a grove of poplars. The spot is not only mysteriously bare in the midst of that thick greenery—but it remains stubbornly barren in spite of every effort to cultivate it.

The story—for there is a story—concerns three ghosts and a lynching.

It seems that back in the "boom" days in Colorado, three men appeared in the village of Hall Valley. They were strangers and, apparently for no other reason, were open to suspicion. At any rate, they were charged with having jumped a claim on Bullion Mountain. No more was needed. . . .

All three were tried, allowed no defense, and adjudged guilty. They were dragged to a towering pine—and hanged.

And the three bodies were dumped into a single unmarked grave in the shadow of the tree.

Not long afterward the townsfolk discovered that the men they had hanged were innocent of the crime. Then it was that the topmost branches of the pine tree blanched and died. After that it was only a matter of time until the rot reached the roots; they gave way and the mighty sentinel toppled to earth. No other tree or shrub has ever grown there.

The dead men have laid the curse of a remorseless blight on their own dishonored grave!

Natives of the vicinity go out of their way to avoid the wretched spot, but motorists passing the place at night have arrived in the next village with faces white and eyes staring as they told of three gaunt ghosts stalking about the clearing.

Don't Miss the Startling Solution of This Famous Mystery!

The Spider

By GRACE OURSLER



In the aisle three policemen were struggling with a huge figure of a man. "I didn't do it!" he was yelling...

DURING the mind-reading performance of Chatrand, the great magician, tragedy stalked into the Tivoli Theater in New York City.

Alexander, Chatrand's youthful assistant, was masked and seated on the stage. The magician himself was passing among the audience, soliciting objects to be psychometrized, when suddenly he spied a girl who, from a photograph, he recognized as being an important clue to Alexander's mysterious past.

Upon Chatrand's requesting an object from her, she started to offer him the Spider Locket she was wearing. Her escort objected. An argument ensued, the lights went out and a shot rang through the dark house. When the lights came up again the girl's escort lay dying.

Inspector Riley appeared, forbade anyone to leave and questioned the girl, Beverly Lane. She identified the victim as John Carrington, her guardian, and recognized Alexander as her lost brother, Paul.

The lad, though masked and in a hypnotic trance, was discovered to have a pistol in his pocket and was therefore charged with the murder. He was confined to his dressing

room where, later, Chatrand, fearing for the boy's sanity, made a desperate attempt to free him. Awakened from the spell, Alexander recognized his sister—but betrayed a grudge against the dead man! Then Chatrand discovered the Spider Locket on the dressing-room floor!

When the Inspector appeared, Chatrand surrendered. Meanwhile, two thugs had been caught robbing the dead man's clothes. They confessed to seeking the Spider Locket which was to have been used that night as a signal by a dope-running gang. Chatrand, unaware of this, gave the locket to the Inspector—only to increase the latter's suspicions. Riley then announced that he would take the lot of them down to Headquarters.

CHATRAN, facing ruin for himself and Alexander, obtained Riley's permission to make one last attempt to expose the murderer whom he believed to be in the audience. So, handcuffed to the Inspector, the magician staged a seance before the footlights.

In the darkness, while the audience watched, the spectral shape of the murdered man floated across a huge mirror.

The police are baffled. No detective in the world could pick a murderer from a thousand suspects! But Chatrand, the magician—with Beverly's happiness at stake—tries the impossible, and the result is a tremendous surprise

The ghost was about to name his assailant when—a shot rang out—the mirror splintered—and a voice wailed!

When the lights went up, Chatrand had escaped from his handcuffs and vanished. He was discovered, in the wig and make-up of Carrington's ghost, in the manager's office. There, under Inspector Riley's questioning, Estelle, the French maid, hysterically testified to having seen Alexander reach for his gun just before the murder occurred!

"I'VE got all I want until I take you downtown," decided Riley abruptly. "Schmidt, take that French girl downstairs, and tell Dougherty to hold her."

Estelle, who was leaning against the wall at the back of the room and sobbing as uncontrollably and hysterically as a child, again felt the firm grip of the law on her shoulder. As she was half jerked across the room and pushed out into the corridor, where she was immediately turned over to the policeman who was stationed there, she felt as if the scorn and contempt in the eyes of Chatrand and Beverly would burn a hole through her flesh.

With a sigh of relief, Schmidt closed the door upon her cries, and returned to the room, a quizzical and puzzled look on his usually bland and untroubled countenance. He saw Beverly throw herself upon the couch in a release of dry-eyed desperation and unconsciously he drew near to her.

"Riley!" Chatrand's voice was on edge as he interrupted the notations the Inspector was penciling in a grubby note-book. "You've got to listen to me."

"That girl saw him reach for his gun!" Riley reminded the magician with a brief glance from under his bushy eyebrows.

"I don't give a damn what that girl says," flared Chatrand. "The boy didn't do it. If you'd stop and think for a minute, you'd know he didn't do it! Downstairs you listened to me, and we tried a new kind of third degree, didn't we? Well, don't you realize you almost had your man then?"

Riley pursed his lips. "You were trying any desperate trick you could think of to get the kid off."

"Use common sense for a moment, Riley," Chatrand snapped. "You're sore because I got away from your handcuffs, but I did it for a real purpose. I played the dead man in that mirror—to break down the nerve of a murderer! And by God I almost did it! I did do it! If you'd only use sense enough—"

"You can tell the rest down at Headquarters," drawled Riley wearily, and brushing directly past Chatrand, crossed over to the house manager's desk and seated himself.

"What are they going to ask you when you get down to Headquarters?" Chatrand demanded angrily. "They're going to ask you who fired that shot—the shot that broke the glass during my séance!"

But Riley was bent over his papers, evidently too absorbed in his work to hear the magician.

Chatrand turned from him in disgust, and his eye caught that of Sergeant Schmidt.

"What's he going to answer them when they ask that?"

he demanded of Schmidt, heatedly. "He can't answer it, because he doesn't know! Nobody in this theater can tell who fired that shot. That shot was fired by a desperate man—a guilty conscience—a man who couldn't bear another second of it—and he broke the glass to save himself from crying out his own guilt!"

Lazily, Schmidt shuffled over to Riley's desk. Step by step Chatrand followed him, talking all the way, and still talking as Schmidt leaned over and whispered to the Inspector.

"Did Alexander fire that shot?" Chatrand's voice rose argumentatively. "You know he didn't! Because Schmidt was beside him all the time! Did I fire it? No—because I was in the mirror, impersonating the dead man! Then who did do it? And what in God's name is the use of talking to that French girl, or taking us down to Headquarters until you find out who *did* fire that shot—for *there* you have the real criminal—the man who killed Carrington! That's only common sense, Riley, and I'm appealing to you because I know you're a sensible man—a practical man—and I don't want you to make a mistake!"

He halted, breathless, as for the first time Riley looked up at him, and then at Schmidt.

"Say, Chief," Schmidt spoke almost apologetically. "Why didn't the magician see who fired the shot, if he was standing behind the glass and looking through?"

"That's a fair question," agreed Chatrand quickly. "You see, that box is an illusion. I invented it myself. You can see me, but I can't see you. I can't see anything. Go down and try it yourself! I just stand there and work the inside lights, but I can't see anything in front of the glass!"

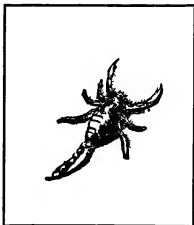
"Then," snorted Riley, "you haven't any idea yourself who shot at the glass?"

"No!" admitted Chatrand with a challenge in his voice. "I haven't—any more than you have! But one thing I do know. I know that shot was fired, Riley, by the head of the biggest dope ring in all New York. The man who was 'higher up'—the man who was a killer. I tell you, you can get that man! We can catch him red-handed and break him down! If you'd only trust me ten minutes more! But if you let him get out of this theater, you'll never, never get him!"

Riley leaned back in the swivel chair, and sounded the sturdiness of his front teeth with a thoughtful pencil-tip.

"WELL," he allowed, slowly, "there may be something to what you say. But I want to tell you, Chatrand, I can't trust you!"

"I don't blame you, Riley," Chatrand leaned over the desk earnestly. "But don't you realize that if I wanted to get away, I could—before you knew what was happening? I mean it! I don't want to get away. But if you go through with your scheme, you'll *fail*. You couldn't convict Alexander or me on the evidence you've got! But do you know what would happen? It would be a case of 'not proven'! That's all. For the rest of their lives, there



would be a cloud over this girl here and her brother. And my career, which, after all, does mean something to me, would be ruined! I couldn't even play a county fair again, if I didn't prove I didn't kill that man. Even you can see that!"

"What are you driving at?" Riley scowled. "What is it you're trying to propose now?"

"I'll tell you, Riley!" Chatrand took a full breath and straightened up with renewed hope. "You're a superior policeman. I've seen that tonight. I know you've got more in your method than a punch in the nose or a crack over the head, and the brutality of the old third degree. Isn't that right?"

"A PUNCH in the nose has solved many a crime," Riley insisted with dignity.

"But you do believe in breaking down a man's nerve, don't you?"

"Why, yes," Riley boasted. "Why, in the Port Chester robbery, three years ago, I fixed up a dummy figure in the room—"

"I knew it!" Chatrand cut in gleefully upon the story. "You believe in the scientific stuff! You're the artistic type of detective, as well as the practical man. Isn't that right?"

"I guess that's right. Yes, I am," Riley admitted grandly.

"If it weren't for that," Chatrand told him confidentially, "I wouldn't propose such a thing as I have in mind, because you wouldn't understand. It takes brains to carry through this scheme. Now, listen, Riley! You do believe that the murderer always returns to the scene of the crime."

"That's a saying," Riley countered argumentatively. It was plain that Chatrand's heavy-weight flattery had knocked the Inspector for ten counts. "Most sayings like that are just bunk, but that one is true," he conceded. "The average murderer has a curious fascination to return to the scene of his crime. That's right. We've made use of that knowledge in some famous cases."

"But you can't do that here," Chatrand pointed out. "Can you? But you can make the scene of the crime return to the murderer!"

Riley threw back his head sharply and frowned.

"I don't get you."

"What I want to do is this," Chatrand plunged headlong now into his new inspiration. "I want to restore everything to exactly the same condition it was in when the show started tonight. My act all set up. The music playing. Everybody in their seats. The only vacant seat will be Carrington's. And, Riley—I want you to sit with Miss Lane in the seat of the murdered man!"

"What for, for God's sake?" barked the Inspector in alarm.

"I want to go through the whole thing from start to finish," cried Chatrand, warming up to his plan as his own words flew. "It can't fail, Riley, if you follow it through. The curtains part. There I am—ready to do my act. The guilty man is watching me. What are his thoughts, then, do you suppose? Good God, he's got to live the whole thing over again!"

"But suppose he does," argued Riley. "He'll just sit there—if there is any such person—and brazen it out."

"Oh, no, he won't!" contradicted Chatrand with high conviction. "Not if you follow it through, Riley. When I come down to Miss Lane, she must give me the spider locket. . . ."

Beverly, who had been listening intently to every word, her hopes rising and flagging with each word of battle between Riley and Chatrand, now sprang to her feet in

mute protest, her eyes dilating with fear at the prospect.

"And you," Chatrand swung on Riley because he could not bear that glance in the girl's eyes, "must do just as Carrington did. Protest! We mustn't tell the audience what we're going to do. Nobody must know but ourselves. I'll have someone at the lights, to turn them out, while you and I are fighting over the locket. It will be too much for him, Riley. There isn't any human being who could stand the strain! That man is trembling now from the shock of that mirror illusion. It only needs another shock—and we've got him!"

Riley paced the length of the room thoughtfully before he turned back to Chatrand.

"Maybe it would work," he admitted. "But I'm no actor—"

"Yes, you are, Riley!" Chatrand insisted frantically. "You're a hell of a good actor, but you don't know it. I'll tell you what to say, and Miss Lane, too—when the time comes. I'll write it out for you."

Riley considered carefully. His eyes roved from the papers left on the huge desk, traveled from Beverly's pleading, frightened look, to Chatrand's earnest, challenging attitude, and finally, to Schmidt—who stood questioning the Inspector with eyes that plainly revealed his own conviction.

Suddenly, Riley wheeled to the desk and picked up the phone. In short, terse terms, he ordered Mr. Young, the house manager, to prepare the stage for the magician's act, and to get the actors and musicians ready to repeat the performance.

With a shrill intake of breath, Chatrand turned triumphantly to Beverly. Impulsively she half ran toward him, her voice strained and tired as she protested.

"I couldn't do it," she sobbed, looking up into Chatrand's eyes for some leniency. "Please don't ask me! I couldn't sit in that seat again."

"My God, I'm counting on you," Chatrand exploded, as he put his hands on her shoulders and half shook her into realization of the supreme importance of the moment. "You can't fail us, Beverly! It's the only chance we've got. The minute I saw you tonight, something inside of me said, 'There's the girl I'd go to hell for!' And there you are, and I would go to hell for you, and I know you won't desert me!"

Her eyes swimming in tears, she attempted a smile and nodded her head feebly.

"That's the girl!" He caught her to him impulsively. "Why, Beverly Lane, this means our future! Paul's and yours and mine—and I'm a mind reader, and I tell you there's a marvelous future ahead of us!"

"Come on now," snapped Riley as he crossed to the door and beckoned Schmidt to close in behind. "If you're going through with this thing—come on!"



QUIET of a reasonable order had been established in the Tivoli Theater, not only through the gnarled hands of the eighteen or twenty policemen scattered throughout the house, but through a far more gentle means. The manager had decided that the quickest way to get permission is to take it. Therefore, without further question of Riley, Mr. Young had proceeded to call his actors to the noble rescue of the moment. The orchestra had played; an opera singer had vocalized valiantly for ten minutes; and Lytell and Fant, the only comedians ready in make-up, had been sent before the curtain with strict admonitions to "make 'em laugh!"

The black-face couple went out and worked as they had never worked before—and they were succeeding in their aim to the extent of a few nervous titters, when their act

was most unexpectedly and rudely interrupted by an order.

Inspector Riley himself appeared, and gruffly ordered them back into the wings. Again the music halted.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" began Riley in a voice ponderous in its dignity. "I've come before you again, and I hope for the last time. I take it for granted that everybody here, with the possible exception of the one guilty person, wants to find out who did this thing. The police are now fairly certain they know the guilty person. But we still have some steps to take before we can be absolutely certain. Miss Lane!"

At his call, Beverly appeared from the wings, Mr. Young and Doctor Blackstone close behind her. She walked stiffly and uncertainly, her hands nervously clenched, and her face set in grim determination.

"Mr. Young," Riley directed, "would you mind escorting Miss Lane back to her seat in the audience? Doctor Blackstone, please return to your seat, too."

The audience caught its breath at that! What were they going to be put through now? How much longer would all this last? And that poor, pale little girl—what was that huge burly detective going to do to her?

Down the stage steps Mr. Young guided Beverly carefully. When she reached her seat, she sank down gratefully and closed her eyes as if to hoard every bit of courage she might have.

"Schmidt!" Riley was roaring into the wings. "Have you got everybody lined up there?"

SCHMIDT, too, emerged from the wings and advanced upon Riley with his usual strolling quietude.

"I got them all placed, Inspector," he reported. "Everything's ready."

"Good," nodded Riley. "Now, I want two men on the stage. I want a man down in the orchestra pit there that leads under the stage. Two men at the head of the aisle, two at the center and back of each of the aisles. That goes for the balcony, too."

As the Inspector directed, Schmidt fired orders at the policemen, placing them at the required positions.

"Now men!" Riley lifted his voice in pitch. "Draw your revolvers!"

A shudder ran through the audience, as a sea of pale faces turned to stare into the barrels of the leveled guns in the aisles. Women drew their wraps closer about them, and the men shifted uneasily in their seats.

Riley surveyed the audience as if his eyes were trying to bore through them. Then from his pocket he drew a small slip of paper. He gave a jerk of his thumb to the orchestra and then—he himself descended the stage steps and walked down the aisle of the theater to where Beverly sat. Quietly, he took his seat beside her.

Immediately, the orchestra began to play. Music that the audience had heard before! A waltz, strange and subtle in its harmony—the magician's waltz!

The velvet curtains parted, and Chatrand made his appearance before the bewildered audience! The Chatrand that they knew and loved! Calm, self-possessed, dressed in his flowing, white-lined cape, and his gleaming high

silk hat! Not the Chatrand they had lately seen, disheveled, distracted, in shirt-sleeves and handcuffs! But what was that he was saying above the softened music?

"Ladies and gentlemen!" His voice was quiet and ominous, as if the speaker were aware of more danger than the two leveled revolvers at either end of the stage. "With your kind attention I will try to entertain and amuse you with a few feats in magic, conjuring and mind reading. . . ."

The audience frowned and stole side-glances at each other. What was this? Was the magician going to do his act over again? And why?

There was the French girl—entering in her flashing costume—crossing to Chatrand resolutely, a forced smile on her lips—taking his cape and hat and placing them on the table. . . .

And now the magician was telling them about the cabinet! He had told them all that before! About the Hindu priest who had given it to him. . . .

"Now watch me closely, please," Chatrand's voice was directing them.

The French girl advanced with the pistol! The pistol the magician had fired at the cabinet earlier in the evening, before he had made his assistant appear! It trembled in her hand. . . .

But no! This time he refused it!

"And in two seconds," his voice reached their astonished ears, "I will show you a sight which has caused the most profound astonishment in the principal cities of the world."

AS he spoke, Chatrand himself flung back the curtain of the cabinet. The music reached a crescendo! There stood Alexander! The boy mind-reader—straight and stiff—pale as death beneath his mask. . . .

Chatrand gave his hand to the boy and led him to a chair that the Jap was placing in front of the footlights. . . . The boy faltered as he reached the chair. . . . Chatrand braced him sternly—sharply, and those

down front could hear him speak to the boy. . . .

"Brace up, old man! It's all right," they heard him mutter.

He seated the boy, and turned to the audience. His face assumed a grave expression. The magician was battling, too, for poise and self-control.

"Before commencing my mind-reading demonstration, ladies and gentlemen," he announced quietly—even as he announced before—"I want to tell you a few things about my assistant, Alexander. I found this young man wandering about the streets of Washington. He had lost his memory. I took him with me and he has become the best mind-reading assistant I have ever had. I keep him masked because I am afraid that some evening my performance will be interrupted by someone in the audience recognizing this lost boy—perhaps his mother, his father—or his sister!"

At the end of this speech, the magician's voice seemed to break. He looked directly down into the audience—at Beverly Lane. The girl's head was bowed, her hand was over her eyes, and her shoulders were shaking with the sobs she was struggling to control. Inspector Riley was seen

A Fight to the Finish!

When things look blackest, Chatrand never gives up. Love for Beverly lends him new strength in his unequal battle against circumstantial evidence, stupid detectives and the cunning, desperate killer!

You will be thrilled and amazed by the dramatic conclusion of this great story.

THE SPIDER was an immense success on the American stage and is now beginning a sensational run in Paris. GHOST STORIES is proud to present it for the first time in print.

to lean toward her and pat her hand gently in encouragement.

"I shall now blindfold Alexander, so that he cannot see!" the magician announced sharply. "I will now pass among you. Give me some object—anything you like, and Alexander will tell its name and its history!"

Down the stage steps he came into the audience, and the house lights went up, flooding the theater with a glaring brightness.

"Now, who gave me something?" demanded Chatrand at the head of the aisle. "Oh, you, madam!"

He nodded over at the staring Mrs. Wimpleton.

"You gave me a letter?" he went on. "That's right. And, Doctor, you gave me a watch. Then there was a card—would you let me have that card again, sir? Alexander! What is this I hold in my hand?"

From the stage came the strained, weakened tones of the boy, still in the same singsong, toneless manner that he had previously used.

"It is a membership card," droned Alexander faithfully. "Membership of a golf club! The Wykagil Golf Club in New Rochelle!"

"Good!" agreed Chatrand from the aisle.

THEN he advanced a step and faced Beverly. His lips tightened as he looked into her tear-stained face.

"Do you wish to give me something, miss?" he asked in a low voice.

"Yes," she gasped. "I do!"

"Now, don't you do it," Riley spoke sharply to her, as she started to take her Spider-Locket chain from about her neck. "Don't do it, I say!"

"Why not?" the girl choked out. "I want to."

"Put that back on your neck," Riley ordered her gruffly. "Do what I tell you."

The audience squirmed and strained in its attempt to see what was happening. What sort of thing was this? Another quarrel? The same quarrel?

"Please don't make us conspicuous," Beverly begged hysterically.

"Well, don't do it," argued Riley heatedly, and turned to the magician. "Go away! Try the others. I'm not in the mood."

"But the young lady is interested in my act. Here!"

Swiftly Chatrand reached across the Inspector, took the locket from Beverly's icy fingers, and started down the aisle with it toward the stage.

"Give that back to me, do you hear?" Inspector Riley rose in his seat angrily, and stalked out into the aisle after the magician. "I am this young lady's guardian. She is publicly trying to humiliate me. You give me back that locket at once!"

"You are disturbing my performance, sir," Chatrand turned on the stage steps with grave annoyance. Then he called to the boy on the stage. "Alexander, what is this I have in my hand?"

"It is an object," chanted Alexander tonelessly, "with a curious and bloody history. . . ."

"Stop it!" called Riley and rushed toward Chatrand.

"It is a medallion," continued Alexander in his monotonous drone. "It contains a locket. . . . Inside the locket— is. . . ."

"Let go my arm, sir!" shouted Chatrand as Riley reached him and began a realistic physical struggle.

"You give that back!" shouted Riley.

In an instant, every light in the theater went out! Again the audience was plunged into absolute darkness. The voices of the two men on the stairs, still arguing and protesting, and the sounds of their struggle continued in the blackness.

Then, topping Riley's voice, came a call—the weird, hollow voice of a man crying—

"I am the spirit of a man who has repented too—"

A shot rang out! Someone—a woman—in the audience uttered a piercing scream and crumpled into a faint. Chatrand's voice could be heard calling frantically for lights. . . .

Suddenly, a commotion arose in the aisle where all this had happened. A man's voice was shrieking—someone was trying to get away! A struggle in the darkness, evidently with one of the policemen. . . .

The lights of the theater flashed on as suddenly as they had gone out!

In the aisle three policemen were struggling with a huge figure of a man—a man with white hair, and a smooth, childish face that was now contorted with fear and terror—

The man was Doctor Blackstone! . . .

"I didn't do it!" he was yelling hoarsely. "Let me out! I didn't do it—it was dark—nobody could see me, I tell you. . . ."

A half dozen policemen were on his neck in the flash of an instant, and the bewildered audience saw the Doctor half hurled and half dragged up the steps and onto the stage.

"I told you, Riley," cried Chatrand excitedly. "There was a man higher up in the dope ring! A man who talked only to Carrington and God! Doctor Blackstone—you are that man! You came here to kill him. If you hadn't killed him here, you would have killed him somewhere else, but luckily for you the lights went out and you shot him down. . . ."

"I didn't do it. . . ." blubbered the Doctor frantically. "Nobody could see me—it was dark—nobody knows. . . ."

But even as he spoke Schmidt was frisking him. A second later he handed a revolver to Inspector Riley, who broke it open, and nodded quietly.

"Take him down to Headquarters!" ordered the Inspector shortly. Then he turned to Chatrand. "Well, I've got to hand it to you, Mr. Magician!"

"No, you deserve all the credit, Inspector," Chatrand grinned appreciatively.

"What I want to know is," Riley probed, "how you put it together?"

"Well," Chatrand confessed, "the moment I found that locket in the dressing room, I knew it was dropped there by a coward. A man who didn't have the guts to hold on to it once he had it. I figured he couldn't stand a shock. . . . You saw how it worked out. . . . And Inspector—there's only one thing on my mind now. I'd like to have my picture back."

"What picture?" Riley frowned.

"Why, my picture of Miss Lane, that you took from me."

"Sorry!" Riley shook his head. "You can't have it back. It goes down to Headquarters."

CHATRAND bit his lip. Then, after a moment's hesitation, he reached into his inside pocket and brought forth the photograph!

"Then I'd better give it to you!" he said sheepishly.

"Well, for God's sake!" snorted Riley, and began going through his pockets to see if he might be missing something else.

"Mr. Chatrand!" The house manager approached the magician eagerly, and began a hasty whispered conference with him.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" Chatrand stepped down to the footlights and addressed the audience in his most cordial manner. "At the request of Mr. Young, I want to thank you, on behalf of the management of this theater, for your patience, your good nature, and your cool-headedness in the face of what was really a very trying situation. The management regrets that it is now too late to go on with the other acts on this bill, but I want to assure you that they are up to the regular Tivoli standard, and we hope

you will continue to patronize this theater in the future. "Just one word more!" he added in a more confidential tone. "Please don't tell your friends what happened here tonight! You can understand that the management wants the matter kept as quiet as possible. Just tell your friends there is always a good show at the Tivoli! And—oh, yes, the Inspector says you may all go home now!"

Perhaps those in the audience of the Tivoli Theater the night of the murder of John Carrington and the capture of the head of the biggest dope ring in New York, felt strangely important over all the news they might be able to tell concerning the notorious affair that was splashed across the headlines of the newspapers the next morning.

But there were several things that only one member of that audience ever knew. And that one member was Beverly Lane!

Long after the theater had been emptied of its excited, babbling spectators, those behind stage were deeply engaged in winding up the excitement of the evening.

Riley, after telephoning his success to Headquarters, and sending Doctor Blackstone down in the wagon, escorted by Schmidt and Dougherty, had much to attend to before he felt free to leave.

CHATRAN, realizing how spent Beverly really was in spite of her grateful joy in the solution of the dreadful crime, had appealed to the little girl in the skating act for help.

Gratefully Beverly rested on the hard couch in the skater's dressing room, while she waited for Chatrand and her brother to dress. Gratefully she accepted the kind solicitude of the little skater, and the cup of hot coffee that was pressed upon her. But her mind was a whirlwind of reeling impressions. Above and beyond them all, her heart was whispering to her a heavenly, ecstatic story. . . .

She was in love! She had found the man! He had proved his worth—there could be no other like him—*ever*! She was free from the oppression of the guardian who had made her so unspeakably unhappy these past two years, who had driven her almost to insanity! Her brother was safe! Safe—and restored to her! Someone had loved him and taken care of him and watched over him all this while . . . and that same Someone loved her, too! Had told her so! And he would love her and take care of her and watch over her, too—always—she was sure.

She sank back on the couch and closed her eyes gratefully. Her head throbbed, and her eyes ached from crying—but she was happy! Happier than she had ever been or had ever hoped to be. . . .

A knock came on the dressing-room door and she started to her feet. The little skater leaped to open it.

There he was! Chatrand—the magician! The man who had surely, inevitably woven a magic spell over her heart! And beside him—was Paul! Pale but smiling and oh, so

much more like her brother, he seemed, in his street clothes.

She could hear Chatrand's deep, happy voice thanking the little skater for taking care of his girl! *His girl!* She heard herself thanking the little skater, too, and was surprised when the girl leaned over and kissed her! She knew Chatrand was cutting short the many, many questions. . . .

And then, Beverly found herself in the bleak, gray corridor outside the skater's dressing room, with Chatrand's arm around her and Paul standing near-by, grinning shyly. "Come on, little girl," Chatrand was saying. "I'm going to take you home!"

She blinked! She shuddered and frowned. Then she looked up into Chatrand's eyes.

"I—I haven't any home," she explained quietly. "We just lived in—in a hotel. And, please—I could never go back there!" Her voice held a note of panic.

Chatrand pursed his lips and thought a moment.

"You can come home with me, Beverly!" Paul put in eagerly.

Chatrand shot him a quick glance.

"Why, yes," he agreed slowly. "We'll get you some things and you can stay at my apartment with Paul. I'll put up at a hotel!"

"No!" cried Beverly without thinking. She turned and clutched his arm in fright. "No! You mustn't leave us! Please!"

IMEDIATELY she realized what she had said. But Chatrand was too quick for any sweep of maidenly regret. He drew her to him hungrily—breath-taking—and crushed her against his rough tweed coat.

"Do you mean that, honey?" he begged.

"Yes," she nodded, her voice muffled against his lapel. "Do you mean—" He held her off and gazed eagerly into her eyes.

Her glance did not waver. "I mean," she told him with a sweet earnestness, "that you're all I've got in the world. And I've wanted somebody like you—always. You're all Paul and I have! You mustn't leave us! You told me you loved me. . . . I love you, too—just as truly as if I had carried your picture for two years!"

"Come here, Beverly, this minute!" Chatrand caught her by the hand and trailed down the corridor with her firmly in his grip. "We're going to get married—tonight—before you have a chance to change your mind. Get out of the way, everybody!"

Up the drab iron staircase he led her so swiftly that she had to run to keep up with him. Close behind them followed Paul, his eyes shining with excitement. Through the emptied theater, and up the red-velvet staircase to Young's office.

Chatrand knocked at the door, and without waiting for permission, flung it open and faced Riley, who was seated at the huge desk behind his papers. (Continued on page 91)

\$10 for a Letter!

WHEN you have read this issue of GHOST STORIES Magazine, let us know what you think of the stories it contains.

Which story is best? Which is poorest? Why? Have you any suggestions for improving the magazine?

Ten dollars will be paid to the person whose letter, in the opinion of the judges in charge of this award, offers the most intelligent, constructive criticism; \$5 to the letter considered second best; \$3 to the third.

Address your opinions to the Judges of Award, care of GHOST STORIES, 1926 Broadway, New York, N. Y. This contest closes July 25th, 1929.

Three awards will be made promptly. See that your opinion gets one of them.

PRIZES

for opinions on the
March GHOST STORIES
were awarded as follows:

First Prize \$10

Mrs. P. O. Boggs
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Second Prize \$5

Miss Dorothy Fritts
Harbor City, California

Third Prize \$3

Miss Elsie Marie Woolard
Clarksburg, West Virginia

The CLUE to the Vanished Bride

By JIM BURDETTE

As told to LOWELL AMES NORRIS

Of the Boston Herald

climbed on board the combination baggage-passenger coach which connected with the Boston-Montreal Express.

I was always glad to get out of Natick. That neck of the woods never appealed to me and the thought of spending a night there was sure to give me the horrors.

Not only was the town completely shut off from the rest of the world, but the sun set there an hour or two ahead of schedule because of a mountain that towered over the village. Something about that mountain "got" me; later I found out that it "got" the whole village as it lay there over the town like a huge cat holding a helpless mouse in its claws. As I remember, they called it *Kat Mountain* at that. It may have been



The monster
clawed at the
door, seeking
admittance

OF all the towns in my territory, back in the days when I was on the road, the one I liked least of all was Natick, 'way up in the Maine woods near the Canadian border, where many unexplainable things happen that seldom find their way out to the incredulous world.

Natick is a one-train town that some of you may have stumbled upon in your travels, although it is very well hidden. I used to get there late in the morning after spending several hours on the branch line behind a wood-burning locomotive that puffed and coughed and chugged through a mountainous wilderness.

The village boasted one store. It belonged to Josiah Sampson and in it you could buy anything from a cream puff to a coffin. After getting your orders, there was nothing to do but hang about all day until night, when you again



the feeble daylight; it may have been the brooding forest; but I had an unpleasant feeling that unseen eyes were constantly watching the clearing—eyes that belonged to no living creature.

On this particular visit I had just collected a good-sized order from old Josiah, although it had taken pretty nearly

A strange beast made its lair in the lonely cabin on the mountain—but the honeymooners went there—unwarned, unarmed. That night the girl disappeared—and no man could guess the secret of her awful fate

the whole day to do it. It was getting well along toward dusk when an open roadster bearing Massachusetts license plates drew up outside the store. A well dressed man, perhaps thirty-one or -two was driving, accompanied by a very attractive girl whose smiling eyes were filled with the joy of living. Luggage, tent poles and a huge heap of canvas were piled along the running-board, and when the driver got out to examine his gasoline tank, I thought I saw several bits of bright-colored confetti drop to the ground.

"My tank is pretty well filled," he remarked pleasantly as Josiah started to take the hose nozzle down from its hook, "but you can let me have a quart of oil."

There was the usual crowd of old-timers sitting on the piazza and I knew well that every detail of the car was being taken in by the appraising eyes of those taciturn natives whose jaws moved constantly but whose lips opened only occasionally to emit tobacco juice and gossip. Not a detail would be missed and more would doubtless be added afterward. How much more, none of us realized—for a tragedy was in the making that June day.

Josiah selected a rag from a pile of old cloths beneath the piazza, bent over the automobile, laboriously raised one side of the hood and peered inside.

"Perhaps he can tell us, dear, how to get up to the cabin on the ledge of the mountain ahead?" It was the girl speaking.

Josiah's head suddenly popped out from under the hood. "Not that mountain ahead?" he demanded.

The girl nodded.

"THERE'S some sort of a cabin there," she explained.

"We saw it as we turned down the valley road. See, there's a bit of the roof showing over that protruding ledge!"

Josiah did not look up.

"I know all erbout it," he said. "That's Echo Ledge, an' thet cabin has been thar ever since I could remember."

The storekeeper cast a skeptical glance over the camping outfit.

"I cal'late it ain't no place fer a female," he added.

"You mean it isn't safe?" the girl persisted. "We wanted to spend the night there."

All movement ceased on the piazza. Jaws, masticating over-sized cuds of tobacco, paused in the midst of a chew. Josiah silently measured out a quart of amber liquid from a nearby steel drum and poured it into the innermost recesses of the engine.

"So the cabin isn't safe?" the girl continued. "Could it blow off the ledge?"

"I didn't say that," Josiah corrected. "I ain't said nothing erbout no cabin. I said as how t'ain't no place fer no female—an' it ain't. Of course, ef yer set on gettin' thar, ain't no way of stoppin' yer. Thar be an old loggin' trail runnin' part way up thet mountain an' ef yer goin', yer best be on yer way afore dark. Thet thar trail may be all

Note: This story is based on facts that are well known to many natives of New England, but the actual names have been changed in order to protect the persons involved.

grewed up, 'cause it ain't been used for years, but ef yer can drive up, just leave the car whar the trail ends. Thar ain't nobody that'll tech it!"

"It doesn't seem to be a very popular mountain." The driver of the car laughed shortly.

There was no answering smile on Josiah's face.

"We know what we know," he replied with a certain dignity, "and we know all we care to know erbout Kat Mountain."

"Then we're not likely to have company?" asked the girl as the man started the motor.

"Company?" Josiah shook his head. "I should say not! Thar ain't a livin' soul I know of thet would prow around that mountain, come nightfall."

"THAT'S fine!" she replied, settling comfortably back into the leather seat as the man let in the clutch and the car moved slowly away. "It should be a fine place for a honeymoon!"

"Honeymoon?" For the very first time Josiah seemed to sense the relationship of the couple in the car. He turned as though to detain them but he was just too late.

Already the automobile was out of earshot. It disappeared down the road in a cloud of dust.

The time must have been close onto eight o'clock!

On Echo Ledge, high up on Kat Mountain, the little log cabin gave signs of occupancy for the first time in many years. A single light shone from the structure, throwing its rays across the valley into the cloudy darkness of a summer's night. The air was humid, the night hot and stifling in the valley despite an occasional breeze that wafted down over the mountain.

The tense excitement which had manifested itself ever since Natick first learned the destination of the honeymooners was still acute. Inside the store the telephone bell jangled incessantly. Outside, more old-timers joined their cronies on the front piazza. From the animated flow of conversation taking place in the semi-darkness I was

beginning to piece together bits of information that explained many things.

No wonder I disliked Natick; Something ominous *did* hang over this little village! The air was heavy with suspense.

Apparently the terror which held Natick in its grip had its beginning years back, on a cold winter's afternoon when Tom Kempton, veteran trapper, was found dying just outside the cabin on Echo Ledge by young Gaston Leroux, the old man's partner. Perhaps there would not have been any story if Gaston had understood his partner's dying message. But Fate ordained otherwise and, a little later, on a bright spring morning Gaston brought his bride to the cabin on the ledge. She was a shy, blushing girl with blue-black hair that nestled above a milky-white neck around which a golden rosy glittered.

With the bride had come a giant mastiff, Rex, who worshipped the very ground his mistress walked upon—a dog that the villagers came to know and recognize by the tinkle of the silver bell that hung from his broad leather collar.



For a very brief period there had been heavenly happiness on Echo Ledge, and then—tragedy. A few of the older townsfolk, still alive, had never forgotten that June morning when Gaston burst into the little country store gasping for breath, blood running from briar scratches and rock bruises, his clothing torn in a hundred places.

"My wife!" he panted. "My wife! *Mon Dieu!* She is went!"

LITTLE by little the villagers extracted the story from the excited Frenchman. His wife and Rex had disappeared during the early evening of the night previous. When it became late and they still did not return he had started in search of them. All night he had wandered over the mountain.

A posse, hastily organized in the village, set out. They, too, failed to find any traces of the missing bride and dog. The two had disappeared as completely as though the ground had opened up and swallowed them.

Days passed and there was still no news. Finally, one morning, the door of the cabin was found swinging in the wind. Gaston had gone, never to return.

It was during the next winter that disquieting reports began to gain circulation in the village of Natick. Folks said there was a strange dog loose in the vicinity, with a shining bell tied to a leather collar. Apparently nobody got a real glimpse of this visitor, yet there were many who were certain that something—gaunt and spectral—with a bell that tinkled, had followed them to their homes. Others swore that a misty form was to be seen on moonlit nights outside the lonely cabin on the ledge.

Josiah Sampson swore he had seen the Thing. It had come into his snow-covered rose garden at midnight, seeming to follow the trail of Leroux's vanished bride who had stopped for flowers during the triumphant bridal trip to the mountain. It had scratched for admittance at the door, driving the family watchdog to shelter.

There were others who said the Thing prowled each night along the dusty country road that skirted the mountain at the junction of the old logging trail. Although some said it vanished into thin air upon reaching the village outskirts, all were agreed that otherwise its canine characteristics were as marked as those of any ordinary dog.

Fawning, pleading, begging, it apparently exercised all its wiles to entice frightened villagers up the unused mountain trail. Folks began to keep away from Kat Mountain. There was even some talk about building a new road that would not skirt the mountain. But time passed, and the tale lost its luster and was gradually forgotten in the surge of modern contraptions that invaded every Natick.

Automobiles evolved from the "horseless buggy" stage and began to be considered as necessities. High tension poles bearing electricity to distant hamlets were erected down the valley and ran across a portion of Kat Mountain.

Then, suddenly, echoes of the past were recalled. The ghost dog that had been forgotten for many years was roving again! Canadians living in the far distant clearings reported they had heard the tinkle of his neck-bell. A few of the elders of the village claimed to have heard the same uncanny sound. Matters were fast becoming serious. No longer, according to the various stories, did the ghost dog lie in hiding at the beginning of the old logging trail. He had turned killer. Cattle and sheep in

the vicinity of Natick were dying. Wise old natives said these animals had been stricken by the bite of the phantom dog.

Terror stalked through Natick's dusty streets.

Day by day the mortality among the cattle grew. There was talk of getting up a posse armed with silver bullets. Once a beast was visited by this ghost dog, the country people said, it sickened, and the marks where the specter teeth had sunken deep became ulcerous sores. A few more hours and the animal collapsed and died. The nearest veterinary was at Jackman and the nearest doctor thirty miles distant, in a lumber camp.

The tiny settlement grew desperate. Several men who had attended the doomed animals died in agony. A drummer suggested that it might be an epidemic of the dread hoof-and-mouth disease, but the natives laughed him to scorn. The Canadians said the ravages of the ghost dog would continue until a priest could be brought to bless the cattle. Then, and only then, could the animals become immune; but the nearest priest was at Lac Frontière.

Such was the story those people told me indirectly that hot muggy night in the little country store. And they were in deadly earnest. So much so indeed that, although a confirmed skeptic in such matters myself, I was convinced of their sincerity. Something serious was afoot.

Worst of all—the lair of the ghost dog was said to have been traced to that lonely, deserted cabin on Echo Ledge, where the door flapped to and fro in the wind—the cabin whose light we could see shining brightly over the valley at that very moment.

"Right ter their death in that cabin yer sent them, Josiah," cackled one senile, bewhiskered individual in wheezy sentences. "That's whar yer sent them! That thar mountain is a killer, I tell yer! Some mountains are like folks and that thar one be a reg-lar murderer. . . ."

He paused to haul out a huge plug of tobacco from a convenient pocket. Several of the other old men gathered closer to the kerosene lamps that hung from the store ceiling. Another old man cleared his throat as though to speak, but the bewhiskered individual waved his hand for silence.

"**A**N' that ain't all," he announced daskly. "Do yer folks know what day this be? 'Tis Midsummer's Day and 'twas on Midsummer's Day about twenty-five years ago that Gaston's bride stepped out into the darkness and warn't never seen sence!"

Josiah Sampson winced. So did I. The thing was beginning to get on my nerves. It seemed so unreal and yet. . . . I glanced at my watch. It was almost train time. With a sigh of relief, I rose to my feet and went to the back of the store to get my sample cases. As I came out on the piazza again, somebody stopped in the middle of a sentence. For a time they had forgotten I was with them and had talked freely. But now a sullen silence settled down on the piazza. Grips in hand, I started down the steps toward the depot. I had never liked Natick and now I liked it less than ever. I was glad to be off.

And then it came—

High up above, on the mountain, a sudden, long-drawn-out scream of agony rang out—a scream suggestive of untold horrors and of death; a scream that made one's blood run cold. Echo Ledge caught the sound, held it and then flung it back across the valley, preserving each agonized note with ghastly fidelity.



The light in the cabin went out with fearful suddenness. We stood waiting down there in the darkness—the sound of that scream still ringing in our ears while we wondered just what would happen next.

It was Josiah Sampson who first found his tongue. "Good Lord!" he gasped. "Something's gone wrong on the mountain!"

Something had gone wrong—but what? I recalled the stories I had just heard and tried to dismiss the thing as a dramatic coincidence. But nothing could explain away that scream of terror. It was the cry of a soul gone sick with madness.

The valley was dark except for the lighted windows in the railroad station and the glow of the hanging kerosene lamps in the country store. Except for the little group of men that stood in the middle of the road beside me, the rest of the town must have been in bed.

It was getting late. I picked up my grips again and moved off toward the depot.

A light bobbed from beyond the railroad station. There came the shrill shriek of a locomotive whistle; then the lighted cars whisked past, gathering momentum. The train had gone! And here was I, stranded in a town terrorized by a ghost dog that lived on a mountain where hideous screams rang out in the dead of night.

I rejoined the group still standing outside the store watching Kat Mountain, now in darkness. Suddenly, high up in the gloom, a beam of light shot down the valley from the ledge, its beginning a tiny needle-point of light. Up and down the mountain side it played and then vanished as mysteriously as it came.

"THERE'S death abroad on that mountain tonight, I'm telling yer," cackled the old graybeard who had previously admonished Josiah. "That light don't mean no good to nobody." Muttering something about rheumatism and the damp night, he hobbled away from the store. Two or three others followed. The darkness swallowed them up.

From beyond the mountain came a flash of lightning and the rumble of distant thunder. Perhaps that was why we had heard nothing since the scream.

The mysterious beam of light was again searching the dark flank of the mountain and was now moving rapidly down its side toward the village. What had happened? Perhaps somebody had fallen off Echo Ledge.

Out there in the darkness, where a slip meant death, someone was attempting a rescue. Somebody was descending. By day it was no mean feat, and at night—! Steadily the light moved downward until there seemed something almost uncanny in its regular progress.

For a brief instant an unearthly radiance would touch some twisted tree upon a jutting ledge; then it would flash past. Always it moved.

Josiah, who had gone back to the store for a lantern, now appeared. He went on ahead in the darkness, the

lantern showing only a feeble glow. We followed. None of us were any too anxious to see what we thought might lie crushed, broken and inanimate at the foot of that mountain of death.

The moving light reached level ground. It swung in quick, hurried circles and then died away. There was the sound of running feet. A shape emerged from out of the blackness. It was the bridegroom!

His shirt torn, his face scratched and bleeding, his hair tousled, the man who, a few hours before, had appeared immaculately dressed in the automobile that dripped confetti was now panting and struggling for breath.

"God!" he gasped. "My wife! She's gone! Gone! I thought—" His voice broke. "I thought she'd gone over the cliff. I couldn't find her. She's gone! Vanished!"

He broke down.

Back at the store, under the stimulating influence of a stiff drink of whisky, the bridegroom recovered sufficiently to give a more or less coherent account of what had happened. He and his wife had reached the ledge just before sundown, cleaned out the cabin, lighted a fire in the old rusty cook stove and arranged a bed of pine boughs in one corner.

"It was dark on the mountain," the bridegroom continued. "Dark and still. I never knew there was that much stillness in the world. For an hour or so we sat there while the darkness shut us in. Then just as we were ready to turn in, something scratched at the door. At first we thought it was some wild animal; then we heard the tinkle of a bell.

"SOMEBODY'S lost a pet," said my wife. While that she opened the door and stepped out into the darkness. There was silence. I couldn't hear her footsteps. I called and nothing but the tinkle of the bell answered. Then came that scream! I rushed out, calling her name! No answer. For several moments I was crazy. I didn't know just what to do. The darkness had me! I came back for the lantern. It had gone out. I scratched match after match trying to light it. Then I remembered my pocket flash-light. That, too, was

apparently gone. Later I found it in my pocket. All I could think was that she'd fallen over the ledge, so I went after her. There was nothing else to do."

He lit a cigarette with trembling fingers and rose wearily to his feet.

"I guess I'll be getting back," he said.

There was another flash of distant lightning and the rumble of thunder. Nobody spoke. Feet shuffled and men sought to evade the eyes of the dejected young fellow who stood before them. Some slid out from their seats into the night without a word. The group had dwindled down to Josiah and two or three others.

"I wonder if you folks will be willing to help?" the chap began. "You know the mountain better than I do."

"With a storm comin' up, there ain't much yer kin do tonight," Josiah countered reluctantly.

"Didn't help none last time folks was lost, neither," an-

A Dreadful Honeymoon

Helen and her lover chose a deserted cabin for their honeymoon because they wanted to get away from civilization. The result was horrible.

The bride stepped out of a lighted room, into the darkness—and was seen no more.

The husband, mad with terror, searched frantically—but even his wildest fears fell far short of the fearsome truth concerning her mysterious disappearance.

other voice added with solemn, ominous significance.

But the husband looked relieved.

"You mean they were found all right the next morning?" he asked.

The other hesitated and a queer look came over his face. "Wal, I don't know as yer could say they was all right," the man replied. "They was dead!"

It was very apparent that no one was anxious to organize a searching party that night. Many objections were raised. It was too easy to get lost among the ravines—the high tension wires along the mountain were too near the ground for safety and could not be seen at night—and besides, there was the approaching storm. . . .

"Never mind," the bridegroom exclaimed at last, shutting off the stream of objections. "I'll manage all right. If you people can't help me, or won't—I'll rout out those other folks on the mountain. They'll help," he added confidently.

"Nobody lives on that mountain," said Josiah gently.

"Of course, someone lives there," the husband retorted, all patience gone. "It was their pet my wife went out to see—that animal with a bell."

"That wasn't no pet," one of the natives began.

"No?" said the bridegroom, waxing sarcastic. "I suppose you'll tell me they're belling wildcats next!"

Nobody laughed.

"That animal is the reason why we told you folks to keep off'n the mountain, son," Josiah explained patiently. "Nobody knows just what that Thing is. But it's dangerous, son. It's killed at least two of our neighbors and ten or twelve of our cattle. None of us knows whose turn's next."

The stranger refused to be alarmed. "I'm going back!" he said.

Josiah stopped him as he reached the door.

"We can't hinder yer, son, ef yer bound ter go," said he, "but thar ain't a bit of use in yer goin' back. There's a demon on that thar mountain—a demon that looks like a mastiff with a silver bell—that's what he looks like, but he ain't no livin' critter. He's a killin' demon an' he strikes in the dead of night!"

The husband's jaws set in a rigid line.

"Demon or no demon, gentlemen!" he remarked, picking up the lighted lantern that Josiah had set down. "My wife is on that mountain and nothing living or dead, God willing, will hold me back!"

He disappeared down the road. For an instant I stood with the rest, watching the beam of his flashlight bobbing its lonely way off in the blackness and then I, too, started for the door. Just as I reached it Josiah stopped me and handed me his lantern.

"If anything happens," he whispered, "an' things go wrong, wave the lantern three times. I'll be watchin' an' we'll git help some way!"

I nodded, pushed him aside and ran on. The bridegroom glanced up as I joined him. We walked together for a considerable distance before either spoke.

"Unless you know a shorter cut," he remarked after a bit, "we'll have to go back up the logging trail. It's the only way I know."

"I don't know this country as well as you do," I replied. "I've never been out of sight of the store."

Rain began to fall just as we reached the point in the road where the logging trail turned off. It was pouring as we started up the mountain. By the time we were a quarter of the way up, the wind shifted again and the rain turned to hail. We pushed on.

Every few yards the bridegroom would stop and call out, "Helen!"—the name of his bride. Only the drip-drip-drip of the moisture falling off the leaves responded. It was hard going. In places the old wagon ruts of the trail had been almost obliterated by young saplings pushing

their way through the rotting logs. But on we struggled. . . .

"Helen!" the husband called again and again into the shadows. "Helen!"

There was no answer.

The trail turned sharply and wound itself up a sharp incline. Just ahead we made out the outline of his parked automobile. Here we stopped to get our breath and to rest. My companion extinguished his pocket flashlight and I turned the wick of my lantern low. We were bathed in perspiration. As we rested, the chill penetrated through our clothing and we shivered.

"It's not far, now," my companion promised. "Let's go!"

I took one last drag on the cigarette I was smoking and started on again. Up ahead something moved. I stopped. There came a distinct tinkle of a bell.

Up to this time I think I had regarded the subject of the ghost dog as a thrilling story I could recount between towns in the smoker. I had not taken the story seriously and the misfortune of the honeymooners I regarded as nothing more than a very unfortunate accident happening by chance upon the anniversary of the tragedy twenty-odd years before.

Now on the trail above us I heard that bell again. *Tinkle-tinkle—tinkle-tinkle*—it sounded. Cold shivers began to play up and down my spine.

My companion and I went slowly ahead, his flashlight picking out the path. In the darkness beyond, the bell still tinkled.

Was some unknown Thing crouching ready to pounce upon us?

Nothing happened as we clambered down the long gorge leading to the cabin. The tinkle of the bell died away in the vast shadows we left behind us. Toward the end of the gorge the walls narrowed and we had all we could do to keep our footing on the rocks covered with hail.

Stepping carefully, I followed the young husband across the ledge to where, a few feet distant, the door of the cabin was swinging in the stiff wind. Eagerly he stepped inside the building.

"Helen!" he cried "Helen!"

Not even an echo replied.

"What can have happened?" the young man repeated again and again while I pushed open the top of the stove and piled some sticks of wood upon the few charred bits that still smoldered there. The old building trembled in the gale that swept that unprotected ledge. Now and again small hailstones clattered down upon the roof.

I set my lantern down upon a rough board table. The bridegroom picked up both lantern and table and placed them near the window which looked out upon the path leading up the ravine. A chill shot through me as I visualized another husband who had probably done exactly the same thing on just such a night years before.

WHAT to do next was the problem. Ice covered every bit of ground outside and it was worse than dangerous to be abroad on a mountain such as that. The slightest slip might mean a serious injury, if not death. And there was that Thing with the bell! And somewhere, out there, a beautiful girl was lost—or else—she was beyond all earthly aid.

I knew it was unsafe to venture forth and yet it seemed a mortal sin to sit there in inaction. The wind came in short, quick gusts that shook the little cabin and at times seemed almost powerful enough to wrench it from its foundation and hurl it down into the valley a thousand feet below.

The bridegroom had thrown himself into the one rickety chair the cabin possessed and gazed moodily out through the window. Now and then he straightened up as though to make sure that the lighted lantern was throwing its rays through the glass and up the narrow ravine. Hardly a dozen words had been spoken since we had entered

the cabin. If only something would shatter that silence! I pressed my face against the window and peered down toward the village slumbering below. Josiah had promised to wait, yet no welcoming light below penetrated the darkness. We were utterly alone with—heaven knew what!

It began to rain again. Sheets of water poured down over the ledge and onto the roof. Inside the cabin the leaks made little pools of water on the hand-hewn floor.

The hours passed slowly. I imagined how snug and cosy this cabin must have been a quarter of a century before, when Tom Kempton, the trapper, had made his headquarters here. How he must have revelled in the heat of that old stove! Then Gaston Leroux had been taken into partnership—at least, so the story ran. More years passed and then had come that cold winter's day when Tom Kempton climbed Kat Mountain for the last time.

LIFE continued its endless cycle. Gaston had lived here for a space. Then he had brought his bride here. Years ago this same night his bride had disappeared strangely. And now this latest development! What would happen next?

Suddenly the groom rose to his feet.

"I can't stand this any longer," he cried. "This suspense is driving me wild. I must be doing something. I'm going out to find her before all traces have been washed away."

He threw on his overcoat which had been drying before the wood fire, and started toward the door. Halfway he paused. The wind had died down some minutes before, yet something was shaking the door.

"Helen!" he cried. "Helen!"

He sprang across the room and threw open the door. There was nothing there!

He seized the lantern and, standing in the doorway, held it high above him. Its rays threw a pale sickly light upon the dreary ledge. As he looked, the moon broke through the clouds.

"There was someone outside," the man cried hoarsely, turning to me. "I heard them. But they've gone. Gone, I tell you! Helen!" he called. "Helen!"

Up the ravine came the tinkle of a bell. In the semi-darkness bushes rustled. Again and again the bell pealed forth. The husband turned. Several rocks became dislodged in the shadows and rattled down upon the ledge. Something was coming. The bell sounded closer. . . .

The husband clutched his collar as though to tear it away.

"It's coming back," he gasped. "The Thing that killed my wife is coming back!"

He slammed the door of the cabin.

Out in the darkness we heard something crawling down the ravine. Then it was on the ledge. Perhaps I imagined it, but the air grew close and almost fetid. I gasped for breath. The Thing was close to the cabin now. We could hear its scraping paws seeking a foothold on rocks still slippery with hail. All at once it was just outside the door. We heard it make horrible sniffing noises as it seemed to search for a scent that had long since grown cold. Then the monster clawed at the door, seeking admittance. Frantically we flung our weight against the door and shot the bolt home.

God! The wick in Josiah's lantern was burning low. I turned it higher but the flame dimmed, although the lantern seemed to contain plenty of oil.

"Look!" whispered the husband pointing out through the window. "It's there on the door-step!"

I peered out. A soft gray mass lay prone against the bolted door. Escape was impossible.

The moon rose higher and higher. The ledge was becoming as light as day. Yet the Thing outside the door never budged. The shadows were fading and the furry mass on the doorstep began to glow with a faint luminosity. Even as we looked, the specter beast rose to its feet and

trotted into the moonlight. Around its neck, a silver bell, suspended from a leather collar, shone brilliantly.

The husband seized my arm. He was pointing, gesticulating madly.

As we stared, the ghost dog turned its head in our direction as though sensing our presence by some uncanny means. The great shadowed hollows of its eyes seemed filled with a sorrowful yearning. A pallid tongue lolled from the specter lips. Realizing that it had attracted our attention, the dog left the light-filled clearing and came to stand just outside the window.

It would run a few steps, only to return, tail wagging, to the window where we stood. The bell sounded loud and clear. The bridegroom's grip on my arm tightened as the dog stood before us, begging, fawning, pleading.

"I'm going with that dog," he said.

It seemed as though the dog had sensed the husband's thoughts for the specter retreated up the ravine, fading into a distant blur of unearthly radiance.

"I'm going," he said again. He reached for the lantern just as my hand closed upon its handle. He started to pull the lamp away. My grasp tightened. For a moment neither of us had the advantage. Suddenly I shifted my hold. It caught him unawares and the lantern fell on the floor and burst. It flew into a score of burning, blazing fragments; the burning oil clung to our clothing; it started a score of fires simultaneously in the old building. The cabin was done for. We rushed to the door. From up the ravine the bell still tinkled.

"I'm going with that dog!" the man cried, brushing the burning bits of oil-coated glass and tin from his clothing. "Perhaps he'll lead me to her."

Despite the surface drenching the cabin had received during the night, smoke was already curling from cracks and crevices, while the interior glowed an angry red. We paid no attention. The bridegroom was determined to follow the phantom dog. Where? God alone knew! Yet even as I sought to dissuade him, he seemed utterly unaware of my presence. In fact, he seemed unaware of anything except the dog that still waited. I tried to hold him but he had the strength of ten.

"You're going to your death!" I cried.

Now the dog was returning down the ravine, perhaps to see why his victim tarried. I could hear the tinkle of his accursed bell.

"It's to your death—" I shouted.

"Death is what I want," he replied, "if she's waiting for me. And only that dog knows!"

He shook himself free suddenly and ran up the ravine. Just ahead I could make out the misty shape of the ghost dog. Twice the animal hesitated as though uncertain of the scent. Once the husband stopped. I think he tried to come back, but the dog barred the way. Suddenly both of them disappeared.

A muffled cry rang out in the night. A cry for help!

I RUSHED up the ravine wondering if the bridegroom had been the specter's second victim. Perhaps I was to be the third! Behind me the flames of the cabin lighted the way, serving at the same time as an alarm for the village below. Terrified, heart pounding in my throat, I ran on.

There was a dark shadow just ahead on one side. There the dog lay in waiting. As I came closer I noticed an almost invisible gully that cut into the steep hillside. Had it not been for the blazing beacon behind me it would have escaped attention. For several moments the dog and I stood face to face; then he retreated into the darkness. I followed.

Ahead the bell still tinkled faintly, but I could barely hear, for my heart had somehow slipped into my throat and was pounding deafeningly. Just a little way ahead the dog stood upon a mound of earth. In front of him something lay sprawled in the darkness.

It was the bridegroom.

I turned the man over and slipped my hand over his heart. The beats were faint but regular. His pocket flashlight was still gripped tightly in one hand. Ahead the bell rang loudly without ceasing, but when I looked up the dog had vanished.

Prying the searchlight loose from the inert man's fingers I turned it on.—A beam of light shot in the direction of the bell—

Good God! We were on the brink of what appeared to be a sort of well or cistern, concealed by vines and shrubs freshly torn aside. Some eight or ten feet below us I saw the body of the young bride. One hand was entangled in a leather strap caught on the root. From this strap a blackened bell still hung suspended and was giving forth a silver note.

The girl's eyes were open. As the light filled the well she screamed. *She was staring into the grinning skull of a human skeleton about whose neck a golden rosary still hung!*

The flames of the cabin had alarmed the entire countryside. Before the hut was completely destroyed Josiah Sampson and a few others had made their way fearfully up the mountain.

By daybreak almost the entire population of Natick stood about the unknown well that had probably been sunk by Tom Kempton years before and abandoned when water was not reached. Nervously unstrung, but otherwise apparently unhurt, the young bride was carried down the mountain by the anxious bridegroom.

There was silence while a man was again lowered down into the well to retrieve the gruesome relics of the past which it contained. The skeleton was identified as the long-sought missing bride of Gaston Leroux who had plunged to her death one Midsummer's night a quarter of a century before.

JUST above the girl were the bones of a gigantic dog which must have perished in what seemed to be an attempted rescue. In the dog's mouth were found shreds of what might have been bits of fur trimming from a woman's dress. The dog had probably died when his leather collar had become entangled in a protruding root and had slowly strangled him.

Faithful in life, sacrificing himself for the human being he loved, he had remained faithful even after death.

Phantom Flowers

A True Story by D. C. RETSLOFF

130 West Walnut Street, San Diego, California

CALLA LILIES. I cannot look at them. They fill me with a nameless dread. The sight of them makes me clench my hands until I want to scream. Why? The following incidents from my own life may, perhaps, explain:

It was three o'clock. The Sunday afternoon was dark and dreary. Rain swept in gusts against the window panes. The tall pines, set close around the house, flung their branching arms up as the wind belled under them—then dropped back with a dismal wail. I was alone in the library.

For an hour I had been reading, my mind dimly conscious of the wail of the pines outside and the snap of the logs in the fireplace.

Suddenly I sensed a presence in the room with me. I knew that my father and my sister had gone to a lecture; that the maid was in her room in an ell adjoining the house.

I kept my eyes on the book before me until I could stand it no longer. Then I turned slowly in my chair, my eyes drawn, as if by a magnet, toward the closed double doors. I had to use all my will power to keep from screaming.

My mother, who had been dead for two years, came through one of these doors, walked slowly across the end of the library then turned and faced me.

She carried a large bunch of calla lilies in her arms. I saw her lips move, as if she were saying: "Uncle Henry."

My book fell to the floor. I sprang up. I was alone. The fire snapped, the pines wailed. . . .

When my father came in, a few minutes later, I told him of the apparition. He smiled and asked me what kind of books I'd been reading.

The next morning he received a telegram saying that his eldest brother, Henry, had died suddenly, between three and four o'clock on Sunday afternoon.

Four years passed. I had almost forgotten the incident in the library. One night I had brought home a set of examination papers to correct and was working feverishly over them. I heard the clock strike twelve but paid no heed.

It was the month of June. The wide window behind my desk was open and so was a smaller one opposite.

All at once the feeling came over me that someone or something was near. I dropped my pencil, left the chair and stood with my back against the solid wall.

A dark form floated through the wide window beside me and crossed to the single one. I could see that it was a

woman, although the face was hidden from me.

At the window on the far side of the room, the figure paused. A misty light—like that made by a street lamp enveloped in fog—surrounded her. As I watched, she turned toward me. She held a large bunch of calla lilies.

The misty light cleared a trifle. I saw the phantom's face plainly—it was my mother. Her lips framed the words, "Aunt Carrie."

She formulated the name three times, then floated out of the window, just as the clock chimed a quarter past twelve.

I did not go to bed, but lay down on a couch. As soon as it was light enough I went to the telegraph office and sent a wire to my cousin in Los Angeles. "Aunt Carrie" was her mother.

BEFORE it was time for me to leave the house that morning I had a reply. My aunt had been killed the preceding evening as she was returning from the theater. Her automobile had overturned on the wet pavement.

In 1920 I married and left the northwest to make my home in California.

On the evening of the twelfth of December, five years later, my husband was attending a Board of Director's meeting, and I sat in his den, addressing Christmas cards.

It was about eleven o'clock. The house was very still.

I had almost finished the cards when I had the sensation that I was not alone—that someone was watching me.

I looked up quickly and on the balcony outside my window stood my mother, holding a bunch of calla lilies.

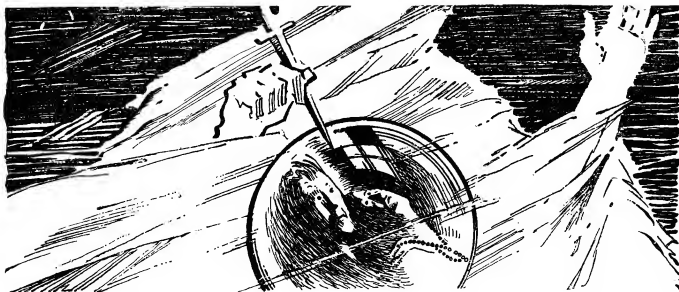
I left my chair and started toward the window, keeping my eyes fixed on her face. Her lips moved as if to say: "Father, father."

I remember reaching the window, remember calling "Mother!" Then I felt myself falling. . . .

When I regained consciousness, I was on a couch with my husband bending over me. It was past midnight, but I insisted that he phone a telegram to my sister in Seattle.

At three o'clock that morning we had a reply. My father had died of pneumonia at eleven o'clock the night before.

Did the third visit mark the final working of the charm, or will my mother continue to appear to me as a harbinger of death? I wonder—and in the meantime, I still shudder when I see calla lilies.



SPIRIT TALES

*An Audacious Queen and the Ghosts that Haunt Kensington Palace—
Some Other Famous and Infamous Phantoms*

By COUNT CAGLIOSTRO

QUEEN VICTORIA, of Spain, has long enjoyed a reputation for her love of adventure and her remarkable daring. Consequently, London society was much agitated recently when the Queen—a Royal Princess of Great Britain, before her marriage—elected to pass the night of her thirtieth birthday in Kensington Palace, reputed to be the most "haunted" edifice owned by the English crown. That ghosts have been seen there, no one, not even the royal family, has ever denied; and during the past hundred years, many persons, including members of the royal household, officials, guests and retainers, have claimed the distinction of having seen one or more of the phantoms.

The Queen passed the night in question in the palace and, unattended, made a nocturnal inspection of its rooms and corridors. Afterward, when questioned as to whether she had seen any specters, Her Majesty declined to make any statement. Her silence, however, did not prevent society and the press from much speculation concerning her adventure. The newspapers not only printed the ghostly story of the palace at length, but intimated that the Queen had encountered things there that defied explanation, although she preferred not to discuss them for fear of provoking controversy.

Among the phantoms said to haunt Kensington Palace are those of the late Queen Victoria of England, who is reported to appear on her birthday, May 24th, King George III, Queen Elizabeth, Caroline of Brunswick and Queen Mary, wife of William III of Orange. Of them all, the two last mentioned shades are most frequently encountered.

The ghost of Mary, it is said, was last seen three years ago, by a lady-in-waiting to one of the Royal Princesses. The specter, a tall and stately lady, was carrying a packet of documents bearing seals, letters and other papers, and was seen to pass through a door which was always kept locked. The room into which she vanished proved to be the very one in which the unhappy Queen had passed an entire night previous to her fatal illness, there destroying every scrap of paper which she wished no mortal eye to see.

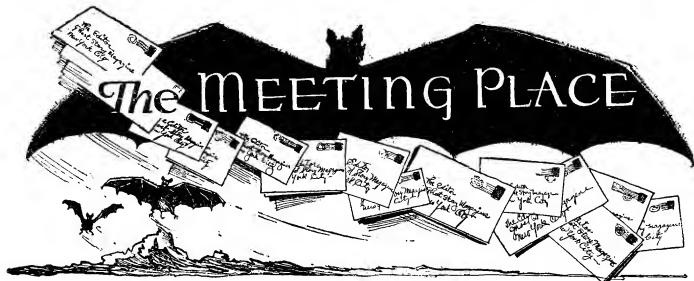
Queen Caroline, who was most unhappy during the years she lived in the palace, is reported to have been seen recently and, as upon past appearances, was in the room in which the golden plate is kept. This service had been her particular delight during her reign and was unfailingly displayed to all Her Majesty's guests. The ghost of the late Queen Victoria is alleged to wear widows' weeds, while that of George III, as in the days when he ruled, is stooped in body, slow of movement and harassed in expression.

Is a Ghost Warning France of Disaster?

THE French people in general, and Parisians in particular, are becoming alarmed by the recent reappearance of the ghost of Michel Ney, Marshal and peer of France under Napoleon the Great. Does the return of this apparition portend another serious disaster to the French nation, as have all the previous visits of the phantom of this once mighty soldier?

According to rumors abroad in the French capital, Ney's shade has again become restless in his tomb and has been seen slipping through the corridors and crypts of the Dome of the Invalides, where his former master lies eternally at rest in a granite sarcophagus. The ghost is said to have made its first appearance on the anniversary of the Emperor's death. Later, in November, 1852, when Napoleon III was planning the *coup* which enabled him to mount the French throne; and again, as recently as 1914, when the Germans began their advance on Paris, Ney's specter was said to have been seen hovering about Napoleon's tomb.

Marshal Ney was shot in December, 1815, condemned to death by the French King, on the ground of high treason, for having remained loyal to his beloved Emperor until the disaster of Waterloo. Ney faced the firing squad with eyes unblinded, proclaiming that he died for his country—not as a traitor! As he fell, it is said, the men who had shot him turned away and were with difficulty restrained from fleeing. Later, members of the firing squad stated that while, in their opinion, the shooting was unjustified, they had, as soldiers, (Continued on page 93)



Who Believes in Ghosts?

An Editorial by ROBERT NAPIER

IT is often said that only ignorant people believe in ghosts. But—is this true? Readers of GHOST STORIES will remember that in past months this magazine has printed amazing true accounts of supernatural phenomena vouched for by David Belasco, Lord Castlereagh, the Reverend Isaac Funk, Robert Browning, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and many others. It would certainly be impossible to call any of these men uneducated or poorly informed!

I wonder if the skeptics have ever stopped to ponder the following astounding facts:

One of the greatest literary productions ever written, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, would be incomplete today if it had not been for a psychic revelation. After Dante died, it was learned that thirteen cantos of the poem were missing. No one could find them. A few days later Jacopo Dante, the son of the poet, dreamed that he was visited by his father, who gave him explicit information as to where the manuscript was hidden in a castle belonging to a friend. The information proved to be entirely correct.

Ben Jonson, Shakespeare's comrade—a sophisticated, hard-headed man—claimed that he saw the apparition of his eldest son with the mark of a bloody cross on his forehead—at the moment of the boy's death by the plague.

The life of William Harvey, the scientist who discovered the circulation of the blood, was saved in a curious, apparently supernatural way. As a young man, he started to board a ship at Dover, but was detained—with no reason given—by the governor of the port. Within twenty-four hours the ship was wrecked—and all on board were drowned! The governor then explained that he had been instructed in a dream to prevent a person answering Harvey's description from going on board the boat!

Sir Robert Peel, a prime minister of England, saw the phantom of Lord

Byron in London in 1810—when Byron was actually lying in bed at Patras, delirious with fever. That same day the specter of the famous poet appeared to several other persons and was actually seen writing his name among the inquirers after the King's health!

Numberless other instances of just as startling a nature—and authenticated by equally sane and intelligent men—could be mentioned.

Under the circumstances, doesn't it seem foolish for any person to state flatly that spiritual manifestations never occur? After all, isn't the word of Sir Robert Peel or William Harvey as good as that of the skeptic?

William Makepeace Thackeray, the famous satirist (a sane, well-balanced man, if there ever was one) writes: "It is all very well for you who have probably never seen spirit manifestations, to talk as you do, but had you seen what I have witnessed, you would hold a different opinion."

READERS are invited to send brief accounts of personal experiences with the occult to *The Meeting Place*. The correspondent's full name and address must be signed to each letter but we will print only the initials or a pseudonym if it is requested. Answers to other correspondents' letters will also be printed.

Here is a chance to get in touch with persons all over the world who are interested in the supernatural!

A Famous Author's Visions of the Future

MAURICE MAETERLINCK, the famous author of *The Blue Bird* and *Pelleas and Melisande*, is a firm believer in dreams. In his latest book, *The Life of Space*, he advises everyone to "cultivate" their dreams. According to his theory, in our sleep we enter upon the mysterious fourth dimension of space, in which events are sometimes seen before they "happen" in the ordinary sense of the word, and it is possible for us to profit by these warnings. His specific suggestion is that, whenever we wake in the night, we should make written notes of the dream that has just deserted us.

The great poet and playwright gives three examples of dreams that have come to him and that have later been fulfilled. All three of these are described by the Journal of the American Society for Psychic Research as "four-dimensional visions of the future."

In the first dream Maeterlinck saw a bottle of hydrogen peroxide standing on a small three-legged table in a corner of his dressing room. On passing the table he accidentally struck it with his knee, causing the bottle to fall and break. The peroxide flowed over the carpet, which began to smoke as though it had caught fire. Three days later he accidentally shook a bottle of sulphuric acid off the table in his dressing room. It broke, and the acid caused the slightly damp rug to smoke freely. Maeterlinck keeps notes of his dreams, but had forgotten about this one until the smoking of the rug reminded him of it.

The second dream was that a part of his garden wall was falling down, the debris obstructing the bowling green which lay beneath it. Five days later a local whirlwind, common thereabouts, overturned a part of the wall, and the debris blocked the path leading to the gate.

In the third dream he was making for Ghent by a short cut, and came to a house he did not recognize. A young man standing by the door of a church told him he was in Bruges, and in further conversation stated that he was the

son of an old friend with whom Maeterlinck had not been in close touch for twenty years. The son he had never seen. Then a sort of motor-bus rushed out of the church. The young man hopped on; it set off like a kangaroo, made a frantic turn and fell over. Among those injured was the young man.

A month later Maeterlinck met the old friend in question, who told him that his son—the young man of the dream—had been severely injured in a motor accident; his car, which he was driving himself, capsized in turning a corner. The accident took place two days after the dream.

It is very interesting to note that in no one of these dreams were all the details accurate—and yet in each case the essential character of the coming event was actually forecast.

M. Maeterlinck remarks that premonitions never announce a fortunate event. And apparently the same is true of dreams. Have any of the readers of *GHOST STORIES* ever had prophetic dreams of fortunate events? If so, I would certainly like to hear from them.

Albany, New York.

C. V.

The Sleeping Ghost

For some years my father was captain of the four-masted barque, *Engelhorn*, registered from Liverpool, England.

The ship's carpenter was somewhat addicted to liquor and had been warned several times that if he did not take better care of himself when returning from a spree on shore, disaster would overtake him.

One night the ship was in dock at Barry, in South Wales. The weather was clear and the deck of the ship was bathed in moonlight.

My father had stepped from his cabin and was about to take a turn round the deck before retiring. Noticing

something peculiar by one of the hatchways, he investigated, and found what he supposed was the carpenter in a drunken stupor.

He lifted his foot with the intention of rousing the man, but it merely touched the side of the hatchway. There was nothing there!

The next morning the body of the carpenter was found floating near the dock.

364 14th Street, Robert C. Shimmin
Portland, Oregon.

The Strangest Warning

When I was ten years old, I lived with my widowed mother, a brother seventeen years old and a sister seven years old. I had one married brother who lived about twenty miles away.

One night my married brother could not sleep. As he lay awake, with a dim light burning, he heard a heavy weight fall in the middle of the room. But there was no visible cause for this phenomenon.

Somehow the uncanny noise worried him. He felt that it was a warning.

He woke his wife and told her he was going home as he was sure something had gone wrong there. She told him to be sensible and go to sleep. However, the next morning, bright and early, they started for our place.

When they got there, everything was all right; so they decided to visit us for a week. On the evening of the third day my mother dropped dead after apparently being well and happy all day.

103 East Jefferson Street, Mrs. S. E. Smith
Sedalia, Missouri.

When I Saw My Phantom Sister

"Ghosts I Have Loved," Mrs. Van de Water's article in the May issue of your magazine, prompted me to record the following experiences:

At the age of six I woke up rather early one morning to find that the ceiling of my room had apparently been removed during the night and against a fleecy background floated my sister Bella. She seemed to be twice as old as when I last saw her a week previous and was clad in a shimmering white gown tied with a wide red girdle, which, with her luxuriant black hair and fair complexion, made her a very attractive figure. She was accompanied by a girl about the same age dressed in the same style of flowing garments but with blonde hair and a blue sash.

My sister watched me for several moments, then smiled and was gone. I jumped out of bed to tell Mother and ask her how Bella could fly without wings.

The door opened as my feet touched the floor and Mother came in with the news that Bella was dead. I can still hear my childish voice as I answered, "Oh, no, Mother! She isn't!" and then I told her what I had just seen.

Needless to say, it was a great comfort to Mother.

A few months later I was carrying an unlighted oil lamp downstairs at dusk. As I opened the door at the foot of the stairs, I saw in the dim light my sister's figure in the childhood dress of the period—but the door went right through her figure! As soon as my brain grasped this unnatural happening I dropped the lamp and went screaming up the stairs.

Because of this vision my mother took me to a medium and I joined what is now known as a developing class. At the second and third meeting a young lady asked the circle as a test to tell her whereabouts a year previous.

Instantly I saw and started to describe a gathering of women. My answer was entirely correct but I was told to hush as I was describing a secret lodge initiation!

Later, in response to a question, I saw another young lady's brother whose whereabouts were unknown to her at

the time. I placed him in the Navy and gave a very detailed description of his surroundings. She received a letter from him before the next meeting—and he was actually in the Navy! In regard to the minor details, however, I never found out whether they were correct or not.

Ill health broke up my studies in this line and I have never seen any visions since.

Pennsylvania. J. A. A.

The "Good Luck Tree" in New York City

New York City, as everyone knows, considers itself a very sophisticated city and looks with some contempt upon the superstition and credulity of other parts of the country. It was, therefore, with some amusement that I learned about the daily pilgrimages of hundreds of New Yorkers to the "good-luck tree" in City Hall Park a few blocks off Broadway. This ginkgo tree was imported from the Orient and was set out about March 15th this year. In the following two weeks it is estimated that six thousand people visited it to make wishes. When the visitors began to break off twigs to take home with them, the police had to take official cognizance of the good-luck shrine and the policeman on the beat was instructed to arrest anyone who injured the tree.

The police order, however, has not in any way diminished the crowds that gather around the tree each day, particularly during the lunch hour when the workers of the district are taking their airing. According to those in the know, all that is necessary to strengthen your luck or to make your wish come true is merely to stand under the tree and let its magic soak in.

The queerest part of the whole business is that no one knows how the good-luck story started. Chinese and Japanese diplomats in New York City profess to know nothing about the tree's uncanny powers and several professors at Columbia University are trying to trace the origin of the belief. They point out that the ginkgo tree has been planted for centuries in the sacred groves of the Buddhist temples.

Hartford, Connecticut. A. E.

Pirates' Haunted Treasure

About three months ago two fishermen at Batabano, Cuba, discovered a bronze cannon lying fifteen feet below the water near the coast. They succeeded in bringing it to the surface and it was examined by Don Dickerman of New York, a student of pirate lore, who wished to buy the cannon for a New York museum. It bore the date 1181, which was three hundred years before Columbus discovered the western world.

The fishermen, however, refused to sell the cannon and were loath even to discuss the subject. After much persuasion they told Mr. Dickerman where the cannon had been found and informed him that, according to legend, a steel-bound chest of pirate treasure lay in the water near-by. They warned him, however, that every attempt to dive down and get the treasure had been followed by disaster. According to the tale, the chest is guarded by the spirits of old pirates and whoever dares to disturb the sunken bullion is either dragged to his death by these evil spirits or is stricken with a fatal illness.

Mr. Dickerman laughed at the stories and on February 23rd he went to the place and began his investigations. He dived once into the fifteen feet of water, came up struggling, swam to the shore and collapsed.

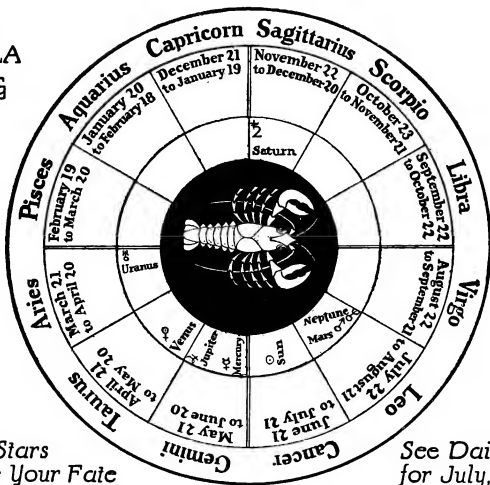
He was unable to give any explanation of what had happened, and that night developed a high fever, the cause of which has not been explained by the physicians.

And the fisherfolk only nod their heads and say, "I told you so."

Key West, Florida. I. Q.

Were You Born in July?

By
STELLA
KING



Let the Stars
Indicate Your Fate

See Daily Guide
for July, page 86

WERE you born between June 21st and July 22nd? Then you are a child of Cancer and of Diana, the changeable and elusive moon, who hangs sometimes like a great golden globe over the earth, sometimes like a mere silvery crescent and at other times appears to have left us altogether. And yet this same moon never ceases to control the ocean tides, to regulate the flow of sap in the trees and to govern, in some measures at least, the great mysteries of life and death.

And you Cancerians are like the moon—changeable, often appearing frail, receptive and negative; yet you exert great influence upon others and are the most tenacious of all the planetary types. Like all water people—water being the symbol of emotion—you are possessive, often trying to engross the complete attention and companionship of those you love. Not always do you remember that each individual must work out his or her own destiny and that no one has the right entirely to monopolize another. Those who control sensation and emotion and who use both constructively, do recognize this and these people also overcome that tendency to jealousy which so often accompanies the emotional temperament.

Emotion is rhythmic, and rhythm is the pulse-beat of the universe; consequently, emotion should be a constructive and creative force. Recognize the fact that you are an emotional type and that it is within your power to attract such experiences as are of the greatest value to you. Your personality and temperament are the weapons you have been given to use. If you allow them to use you,

the great surging force within you will get out of control and result in irritability, abnormal sensitiveness and that feeling of hurt pride and of being misunderstood which causes people of your type so much unhappiness.

You are actuated by the fostering and mothering instinct. Your greatest happiness lies in the home, where you can work for the well-being and happiness of the family. If you are a man you may still possess the mother instinct, which means the protective, nurturing impulse that expresses itself in love and sympathy for the helpless, no matter whether they be old or young.

But this is not all. You are also well fitted for a public career because the moon draws the favor of the public to you. In the world of art, your type excels in music, dancing and dramatic work. Many of you are born imitators. You are keenly imaginative and very sensitive to your surroundings. The Cancerian *artiste* quickly senses the reaction of an audience and is able to give the public what it wants.

MEMORY is another gift that is the natural heritage of the Cancerian and you will find that most individuals born under a strong influence from this sign can remember many intimate details of their childhood. They like to collect objects pertaining to the past, and, as a matter of fact, most of them like to collect almost anything. Memory is a reflective process and it is natural that moonchildren should be endowed in this direction because the moon's light is reflected from that of the sun.

Your health depends greatly upon yourself and your

What the Stars Foretell for Every Day This Month

Below are given the planetary indications for each day in July.

Let them guide you to happiness

1. A good business day. Buy, sell and advertise. Attend to matters concerning real estate, mining, investments, et cetera. Ask favors of elderly people and push your interests.

2. Attend to important matters early in the morning. Be prudent and cautious, and avoid all risk.

3. Exercise great care in all matters. Postpone important decisions. Vibrations are very discordant.

4. Financial matters should prosper but caution is still necessary. Beware of misrepresentation and crooked dealing all this week.

5. Attend to routine. Do not commence anything but finish work in hand.

6. New Moon. Be careful of accidents.

7. Avoid gossip. Visit friends in the evening.

8. Commence new work in the morning but do not sign contracts.

9. Buy clothes or shoes but do not wear them this evening. Business men may buy and will do well in small trading.

10. Avoid extravagance and risk.

11. Morning favorable for general business and correspondence. Afternoon disappointing.

12. Collect money, sell, ask for credit, et cetera. A favorable day for financial matters. Make important changes and hold interviews in the morning.

Do nothing of importance in the evening.

13. Do not discuss domestic problems or ask favors. Avoid publicity. Visit elderly people in the evening, when you may meet with bargains or receive help.

14. A good day both for spiritual and material matters. Make the most of it. Do not wear new clothes or you may spoil them.

15. Write, study and attend to correspondence. Advertise in the evening papers. Avoid extravagance.

16. Fair day for business and finance. Do not believe all you hear.

17. Avoid all risks and be careful not to lose money. Spend the day as quietly as possible and do nothing of importance. Three P.M. is the best hour of the day.

18. Another adverse day. Be careful in traffic.

19. Push business interests and sell. Seek employment in the morning. Attend to executive work and enterprise during afternoon and evening.

20. Guard against possible accidents early in the morning. Spend the day quietly.

21. Avoid argument.

22. A day of enterprise and financial activity, favorable for salesmanship and invention. Begin new undertakings, make changes and seek employment and promotion.

23. Buy wearing apparel, entertain and seek enjoyment. One of the best days this month for general success. Favorable for all artistic and social matters. If you are to be married, choose this as your wedding day. The morning is the most favorable portion of the day.

24. Guard against deception and errors in judgment. Vibrations are confusing. Avoid canned or bottled foods.

25. Prudence and moderation are necessary in all undertakings today. Be on guard against fire and accident.

26. Favorable for writing. Evening favorable for publicity, for asking favors, seeking employment and planning next day's work.

27. Morning good for business and salesmanship. Seek promotion, interview lawyers and take steps to further your interests.

28. A good day for domestic, social and spiritual matters. Visit relatives and listen to a good sermon.

29. An uncertain day. Stick to routine work. If necessary, take up financial matters in afternoon.

30. Vibrations are favorable for general success.

31. A very good business day. Advertise, sell and make the most of opportunities. Travel, make changes and attend to important affairs. Seek employment and promotion and advance your interests in every possible way.

Were You Born in July?

(Continued from page 85)

emotional control. A constant state of irritation or worry undermines health more quickly than anything else. You should cultivate poise and look always for the good. Learn to do things alone instead of depending so much upon encouragement from others. You will find yourself much happier and will soon notice an improvement in your health.

Other things being equal, those born between the new moon and the full moon in any month are the more robust, and this is doubtless particularly true of Cancerians who are so greatly under the moon's influence. In these people the nerves of the stomach are often very sensitive, but, if an optimistic outlook is cultivated and food properly masticated, this weakness can be overcome. Regular rhythmic exercise is important. Train yourself and your children to breathe deeply and to drink plenty of water.

I think if you will bear in mind that

you are of the nature of the moon, you will realize your own apparent changeability, which is not so much change as variation—because the moon remains the same through all its variations. You need variety, both in surroundings and in people, and should take your vacations alone in order to come in contact with different people and change your point of view.

As a talisman you may wear an emerald, pearl, cat's eye, crystal or moonstone. The emerald is a very sensitive stone and was formerly worn as a charm against epilepsy and dysentery. It was supposed also to be of value in child-birth, to drive away evil spirits and preserve the chastity of the wearer. It moreover conferred the gift of memory. The moonstone prevented dropsy, pernicious anemia and other watery diseases.

Your colors are green and silver, white, pearl, and, if you like them, any of the pastel or iridescent shades.

Green is said to be conducive to financial success and there are, of course, many lovely shades of this color to choose from. Green is nature's color and is associated with spring growth and new life.

FOR the past two years the planet Uranus has been sending adverse vibrations to the June Cancerians, upsetting their plans, inducing changes and even, in some cases, causing digestive disturbance and other sickness. This strange planet is now directing his rays to those born about the third of July. If they will live as quietly and simply as possible for the remainder of this year, these people may ultimately benefit through change. Their outlook will be broadened and, even should their experiences seem disastrous, they will have learned how to handle similar situations in the future.

Uranus rules the point of view, and those who are greatly influenced by

this planet are often extremely positive and egotistical. When the mental attitude is out of harmony with the laws ruling the universe—of which man naturally is a part—and is at the same time so positive, the individual carries on a constant warfare against his natural environment, and it is only after suffering the consequences, that he learns to change his point of view and to fall into line with cosmic law. The wisdom of the stars consists in harmony. Each of us must learn to think and act in accord with the cosmic forces. This is exactly what all churches and religions teach—that man must obey and do the will of God. Nature and man are forever struggling with each other, and the result is disaster and to this end adverse vibrations and their consequences are no more than lessons and stepping stones.

Others who will doubtless feel this forceful Uranian ray are those born about the first of January, the first of April, or the fifth of October. Sudden and unexpected changes will affect them during the present year and there is really no way in which such changes can be avoided.

Those born in 1907 and those now in their early forties may expect to get the full effect of this powerful vibration and they should avoid all speculation and risk. They must be prepared for emergency and will be forced into sudden decisions. The unexpected will happen and a close watch should be kept upon business and financial affairs. Some may suffer through friendship, in which case the supposed friend may prove to be the secret enemy. Others may be caught up in some great emotional crisis or infatuation which is unlikely to lead to any permanent happiness. Uranus sends his bolts swiftly, and often without warning. If you were born in 1907 watch your step carefully this year!

THE Leos born about August 22nd and the Aquarians, whose birthday comes about the 19th or 20th of January may see their fondest hopes dashed on the rocks of deceit and misunderstanding about the end of June. They will need all their fortitude and faith to withstand the blow and should avoid the risk of becoming cynical. Fortunately, however, those born under Leo and Aquarius have great faith and are able to understand and forgive where perhaps others might be completely crushed. The blow does not always come from the outside world; sometimes it is in consequence of one's own action. Remember, those who play with fire are likely to be burnt.

The Taureans and the Scorpions born about the 20th of May or November will also feel this vibration from Neptune and Mars, and should be prepared for some emotional crisis. They will not find it so easy to forgive. Those who have any heart weakness should be careful not to overtax their strength lest this vibration affect them.

The May Geminians are now enjoying the favor of Jupiter and should make this a constructive and prosperous period. This applies also to the

Listen In On Life!



December Aquarians and September Librans who are all receiving helpful vibrations just now.

One of the most important planetary configurations that occur this year is the conjunction of Mars and Neptune on July 3rd. It has already been mentioned in connection with the birthdays that it will affect. But it will also influence the lives of many others through happenings over which the individual has no control. Mars frequently exerts an influence on events before the actual date of his ascendency and therefore this particular planet is likely to affect conditions during the latter part of June as well as the beginning of July. The meeting of these two planets takes place over one of the greatest of the fixed stars, Regulus, the Lion's Heart.

The interplay of these vibrations may bring into effect secret intrigues, cruelty and violence. The use of poison gases and the dissemination of disease germs are to be feared under such a configuration. The conjunction of Mars and Neptune was a prominent feature of Ruth Snyder's horoscope. Great storms and possibly earthquakes may be expected about this time. The last time these planets met was on July 18th, 1927.

In a previous paragraph mention was made of the emotional temperament of those born under the rule of Cancer, and as this is the sign of motherhood it would seem appropriate to consider the effect of temperament upon marriage.

The horoscopes of two individuals show whether a marriage would be productive of happiness—but the individual horoscope is a highly technical affair. It is possible, however, to consider this question in a broad way, without the individual horoscope, because temperament and general characteristics are denoted by the Sun-sign.

AS we know, the water signs—Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces—are emotional, sensitive, sympathetic and fond of sensation; they like to be the center of attention. They should intermarry because there exists between them a basic understanding founded on similar desires. The air signs—Gemini, Libra and Aquarius—are mental and intellectual; they analyze their emotions and seek knowledge rather than sensation. Consequently, were Cancer to marry Libra or Gemini, the home-loving nature of the former would be robbed of its full expression by the airy, pleasure-loving Libra or the analytical tendency of Gemini. On the other hand, Libra and Gemini or Aquarius would understand each other; and even if there were points of conflict, the general understanding would continue.

With the fire signs—Aries, Leo and Sagittarius—Cancer would probably fare even worse, for fire and water have never been able to mix. The fiery temperament has little patience and poor Cancer's sensitive feelings would frequently be badly hurt. With

the earth signs—Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn—the water signs find a certain amount of compatibility but it is an incomplete happiness, for the practical earth temperament resents the possessive propensities of the water signs. Earth deals with concrete facts, with conservation and utility; water is concerned with emotion, rhythm and feeling; fire with impulse and creative power; air with thought and the acquisition of knowledge.

The success of a marriage depends so much upon compatibility that perhaps if these general types were taken into consideration there might be more lasting happiness. Attraction is not a sufficient basis for a successful marriage; there must also be similarity in the general outlook upon life—and it is this outlook that rarely changes in the individual. It belongs to the part of us that persists through the ages, though doubtless it is modified by our experiences.

The months ruled by the various signs can easily be ascertained from the chart at the beginning of this article.

Very happy marriages take place between individuals born under opposite signs, each being the complement of the other. This is particularly true of Aries and Libra and of Taurus and Scorpio. I do not know of any between Cancer and Capricorn, but the law of polarity assures a certain amount of attraction between any two opposing forces or opposite types.

The Angel of the Marne

(Continued from page 9)

her lips again, and her eyes were raised to heaven.

Then, for the first time, a feeling of superstitious awe overcame me. Skeptic though I was, I wondered whether the girl had not invoked some divine power that had protected us.

I trembled. The reaction from our imminent danger almost unnerved me. I had feared for my companion, no less than for myself. I knew that, had she been discovered, she would have been shot, along with probably half her village.

She laid her hand upon my shoulder, and its caressing touch seemed to calm me.

"Yes, you must go, soldier of France," she said. "But before you go, let us pray, here in the shadow of that great church yonder. It is a famous shrine, where many miraculous things have happened. Will you join your prayers with mine, for France?"

LOOKING into her clear eyes, I could not lie to her.

"Mademoiselle," I stammered, "I must tell you—I am an unbeliever. That will shock you terribly—"

"No, Monsieur, it does not shock me at all," she answered, though there was a wistful look on her face. "I know that many men, and women, too, no longer believe. But Our Lord does not despise those who stumble helplessly in the dark-

ness. One day He will bring them all to Himself. And—" Here her voice rang out like a silver flute, with astonishing force and rhythm, "He will work wonderful things for our beloved France. The invader shall be hurled back and brought low in the dust!

"Pray with me, soldier," she said softly.

I knelt beside her on the damp meadow, and repeated the words that came from her lips. Simple and eloquent they were. A prayer that God would show His mercies to our beloved country, that right should triumph, that the dreadful flow of blood should cease as soon as His wrath was satisfied. . . .

And then she prayed for me—prayed that I might come safe through all the perils of the war, and that I should be led to acknowledge Him as the author of my being, and my salvation.

I confess my eyes were wet when we stood up. Something was stirring in me, I who had hitherto scoffed at things spiritual, felt that a gate had been opened in me somewhere, that I was stumbling out of darkness into sunshine.

"Now, soldier!" said the girl.

I took her hands in mine.

"Mademoiselle, will you not tell me your name," I asked, "so that, after the war is ended, I may find you again and thank you for your heroism? I shall mention it to General Joffre. Your name, please, and that of this village?"

That tremulous, faint smile played about her lips again.

"Monsieur, the praise of men means little," she answered. "You will know me some day. But not—now. It is better that I should not answer your questions. Farewell, Monsieur."

HER hands hovered above my head like a benediction. Then, with a new strength, as though my wounds did not exist, I leaped into the cockpit. The girl's white fingers touched the propeller and the engine started with a roar. The next instant she was no longer there.

Dark though it had grown, I still could not believe that she had run from me. I should have seen her go. . . . No, she had vanished utterly.

I knew then—yes, I knew that she had been a spirit of good, sent by the Heavenly Powers to help a poor, wounded soldier, and to save France. All my skepticism fell from me. I uttered a silent prayer, asking forgiveness for my past doubts.

In a minute or two I opened the throttle wide enough to send the wheels over the furrows that acted as checks. I taxied the length of the field, and took the air just as two German sentries came running out of the wood, shouting hoarse challenges.

I shouted back above the roaring motor, heard the snap of their rifles and

am sure she is in every way worthy of the homage you have paid her. And I hope that the day is not far distant when your loyalty will be rewarded."

"You are very dense, my dear Sewell," was all that Philippe answered.

With the roses in his right hand, he motioned me to join him, and together we walked forth into the softness of the May evening. The old houses about the square loomed up picturesquely in the twilight. I was thinking of the many famous persons who had lived in Rouen, of the stirring part the quaint town had played in history. The very air about us seemed astir with romance. . . .

THE square was nearly empty, but there were a few persons passing to and fro, and clustered around the statue there was a little group of people, some of whom were kneeling. A woman in

the garb of mourning, her hands clasped, was praying aloud in a quavering voice, while the tears streamed down her cheeks.

AS we drew nearer, I saw a young girl approach, make a genuflection and lay a handful of wild flowers at the feet of the sculptured figure.

Then I saw that the statue was wreathed with roses, lilies, hothouse flowers, and that its base was heaped with floral offerings.

Captain Philippe Roget took off his hat, and mechanically I did the same. Then, to my astonishment—for I had not yet guessed what his purpose was—he fell upon his knees, and reverently placed the spray of roses upon the base of the statue. His lips moved in prayer.

I stood there, watching him, and of a sudden the truth dawned upon me with

almost blinding clarity. I watched in amazement, and I looked up at the noble face of the young girl chiseled in stone. I knew.

Philippe Roget rose to his feet. "That village I spoke of," he said, "was named Domrémy."

And this was May 30th—the day on which the English had burned Joan of Domrémy as a sorceress, on this very site—the Rouen market-place—almost five hundred years before.

"You understand?" whispered Philippe to me.

"I understand," I answered in a low voice.

"They call her the Guide of France," he said quietly. "I believe that it was she who came to me in the hour of my country's gravest peril, to save France through me—and to save my soul."

And to that I was silent.

A Reckoning with the Dead

(Continued from page 30)

"something terrible is wrong. Please don't let me leave your sight no matter how I fight to get out. I'm afraid, Eddie! It has a terrible power over me and I can't help but obey. Something fearful will happen to me if I go with it."

"IT?" he exclaimed, thoroughly puzzled. "What do you mean by IT? What are you talking about, Archie?"

"I can't say, Eddie. I can't tell you now. Tomorrow, maybe. I'll try. . . . But Eddie—please don't let me out of the house tonight. Get help to keep me in by force if necessary."

"All right, Old Man. I'll keep you in. But you'd better let me get a doctor."

"No, no!" I cried. "A doctor couldn't help me any. No one can help me. Just keep me near you, to make sure I don't get out tonight."

I went to bed with Eddie but I didn't sleep a wink. I fought and struggled all night against that desire to follow the specter. And if Eddie hadn't been near me I would have gone.

As soon as it was daylight I got up and looked into Jimmy's room. He was gone. Then I went to my room, but I could find no trace of Clarence. I knew then that it hadn't been any dream.

"Something terrible had happened to them, Mr. Rhodes," Archie concluded, "and I can't shake off the feeling that they are—dead!"

I WAS completely stunned by the boy's amazing tale. The mortal terror in his eyes and the workings of his face as he told it assured me it was no mere hallucination.

"Do you think there is any connection between what you have told me and the old vault?" I asked.

"Yes, I do, and that's what makes me afraid," he replied.

"Well, come on, we'll go up there and see if we can discover anything that

might clear up this mystery," I said starting for the door.

He grabbed hold of my arm and I saw that he was in an agony of terror.

"Please—let's not go alone, Mr. Rhodes! I'm not a coward, but this thing is not of this world and we'd be helpless against it. Please get the rest of the men to go along with us."

"All right," I agreed.

I HAD the foreman gather the men together and we all started for the ancient vault. About one hundred and fifty feet from the entrance we found Jimmy huddled face down behind a clump of bushes. He appeared to be dead. I rolled him over on his back. There was a swelling on his throat that resembled a mass of varicose veins.

I was astonished when his lips began to move and, bending closer, I heard him faintly mutter: "Take it off. . . . Help. . . . There's a big black cat clawing my neck!"

It was his last gasp. I sent one of the men back to the office to telephone the police. The rest of us began a search for Clarence. We found him ten feet away from the vault—dead. On his throat were the same markings we had found on poor Jimmy.

In Jimmy's room the police found some notes he had been scribbling just before the specter appeared. He had described their experience in the vault and the deadly fear that filled him as he sat there alone writing. He wrote that sleep was impossible, so he was just sitting there jotting down the impressions that came to his mind.

Then he mentioned the specter and how it appeared to him. Reminded him of an old portrait of Daniel Webster, he wrote. Then he described the strange spell that was urging him to follow this specter. He told how he had fought it off until he was unable to resist any

longer, while each instant the Thing beckoned more urgently. "From the first moment I knew I must follow the specter—even though it meant destruction," he wrote.

Then came a break in his writing, after which he had scrawled ". . . I am going with it now."

The newspapers made a great deal of the mystery and it was widely discussed. At the inquest, Eddie Hanson testified that while listening to the radio he noticed Jimmy leave the house first and from his strange appearance thought he was sick. Exactly an hour later Clarence went out. He looked as ill as Jimmy had, and Eddie began to wonder what the boys had been up to. When he saw Archie, looking exactly like the other two, pass the door an hour after Clarence had left, he decided to investigate. The same set face and hypnotic stare were identical on each one, he said.

VARIOUS theories were advanced by both the police and medical authorities. Personally, I believe that everyone secretly felt as I did—that it was a ghost; but rather than admit that they believed in ghosts the others tried to give a logical reason for the phenomenon.

The specter, they claimed, was caused by an attack of nerves brought on by the fright of the day before. When asked how it was that the same ghost appeared to all three of the boys and influenced them alike these persons gave the weak answer: "Merely coincidence."

For myself, I make no bones about it. I never believed in ghosts before this occurrence, but I do now. The ghost of the occupant of that vault sought to revenge the desecration of his resting place, believe it or not! If you could see the nervous wreck it has made of Archie you, too, would believe in ghosts.

The Spider

(Continued from page 73)

"Riley!" announced the magician. "I helped you tonight, didn't I? Now you've got to help me! You've got to do the biggest turn you've ever done a man in your life! You've got to get me a marriage license now—right now! You've got to haul out some magistrate from his bed or his night-club! You must know someone—and then you've got to put on your hat and get in my car and ride down with Miss Lane and me to wherever a wedding can be held at this hour. You're going to be my best man!"

THE Inspector looked up bewildered, and Mr. Young, in the chair to his right, stared at the magician, aghast.

"Well—but it's . . ." stammered the Inspector.

"You can do it, Riley," Chatrand pleaded. "I know you can do it. This little kid is all alone in the world now—and I love her! I've loved her for two whole years! I've loved her all my life!"

"I love him, too," Beverly put in staunchly. "Do you blame me?"

Inspector Riley grinned.

"You're the most persuasive guy I've ever met up with, Chatrand." He shook his head helplessly. "You give me a little time here to clean things up, and meet me at the Forty-seventh Street

Station in about three-quarters of an hour. Meanwhile I'll telephone around and see if I can fix it up. I guess I can."

"Gee, you're a great guy!" Chatrand's hand shot out appreciatively, and the two men shook hands firmly.

"Go on, now," Riley ordered gruffly. "Go on out and get your wedding supper."

Chatrand turned and put his arm about Beverly and gave her a happy squeeze.

"By the way," called Riley, "what's your first name, Chatrand? I'll have to have that for the license."

Chatrand stopped short. Then an impish smile crossed his lips. He went over to the desk, with Beverly close beside him, took up a pencil and wrote across Riley's pad in his bold, sharp hand—the name he had not used since he was a boy of fifteen.

Riley looked it over and frowned. "Lord Horace Ingle-Howdrie," he read slowly and stumbingly.

Immediately four pairs of questioning eyes were turned full upon the smiling magician. But he chose to answer only Beverly's.

"I can explain that," he told her, tenderly, "if you don't object to marrying a title."

"And I'll bet he can, too!" murmured Riley to the house manager.

The Specter that Asked for a Kiss

(Continued from page 27)

tials, remember—and then went out to sleep the remainder of the night in my own flat, locking the door behind me upon a house no longer haunted.

But my uncle, Sir Henry, the owner of the house, required an account of my adventure, and of course I was in duty bound to give him some kind of a true story. Before I could begin, however, he held up his hand to stop me.

"FIRST," he said, "I wish to tell you a little deception I ventured to practice on you. So many people have been to that house and seen the ghost that I came to think the story acted on their imaginations, and I wished to make a better test. So I invented for their benefit another story with the idea that if you did see anything I could be sure it was not due merely to an excited imagination."

"Then what you told me about a woman having been murdered, and all

that, was not the true story of the haunting?"

"It was not. The true story is that a cousin of mine went mad in that house, and killed himself in a fit of morbid terror following upon years of miserable hypochondriasis. It is his figure that investigators see."

"That explains, then," I gasped—"Explains what?"

I thought of that poor struggling soul, longing all these years to escape, and determined to keep my story for the present to myself.

"Explains, I mean, why I did not see the ghost of the murdered woman," I concluded.

"Precisely," said Sir Henry, "and why, if you had seen anything, it would have had value, inasmuch as it could not have been caused by the imagination working upon a story you already knew."

(Copyright by E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc.)

Plagiarism

Stories have been submitted to this magazine which are copies of stories that have appeared in other magazines.

Anyone submitting a plagiarized story through the mail and receiving and accepting remuneration therefor, is guilty of a Federal offense in using the mails to defraud.

The publishers of GHOST STORIES are anxious to be all reputable publishers—to stamp out this form of literary theft and piracy and are advising all magazines from which such stories have been copied of such plagiarism, and are offering to co-operate with the publishers thereof to punish the guilty persons.

Notice is hereby given to all who submit stories that the same must be the original work of the author.

You can be free from Constipation —So easily!

Women—why suffer longer with constipation?

Drugs, laxatives—pills and pellets, only make matters worse. Gradually, as their use is continued, the nerves and mucus membrane become dulled and refuse to respond. Then larger and larger doses are resorted to. Finally the drug loses its effect altogether.

Now you can discard this deadly evil of constipation. And as easily as you throw away an old dress. For Bernarr Macfadden's great book, "Constipation," makes the natural elimination of body waste a very simple matter. He tells you what constipation is, what causes it, what effect it has on the general health and how to overcome it.

Although his methods are so effective, they are surprisingly simple! He brings nature to your aid in a way that has never been discovered before!

Send no money—just read the coupon below with its five-day trial privilege—then sign and mail it!

Macfadden Publications, Inc.
Desk G. S. 7, 152 Broadway, New York City

Please send me a copy of "Constipation." I will pay the postman \$2.00 plus delivery charges, upon receipt. It, after five days' examination, I do not feel that the book is worth more, I have the privilege of returning it, and my \$2.00 will be refunded.

(Postage prepaid on cash orders.)

Name.....
Street.....
City.....
Canadian and foreign orders—cash in advance.

\$7.89 American Top-Brick Revolver

Your choice in 32 or 38 Cal. Blue steel, (flat) barrel, snub nose, automatic, 5-shot, 4 or 6 inch barrel, 2 or 3 shot. Fast opening, workmanlike throughout. 215000. Send no money. Pay postman on delivery 27.00 plus state charge.

JENKINS, 603 Broadway, New York, Dept. 7-7-313

New Model Men's Strap Watch

\$3.85

CUT PRICE SALE

"Two years' experience" gives you a guarantee of value, with a 14 karat "Swiss" movement, 14 karat case, 14 karat "Swiss" band, 14 karat "Swiss" buckle. One day's free trial. No money down. All money price. Balance 14 days. 14 karat "Swiss" movement, 14 karat case, 14 karat "Swiss" band, 14 karat "Swiss" buckle. One day's free trial. No money down. All money price. Balance 14 days. 14 karat "Swiss" movement, 14 karat case, 14 karat "Swiss" band, 14 karat "Swiss" buckle. One day's free trial. No money down. All money price. Balance 14 days.

20 DRESS GOODS

BARGAIN—THIS MONTH

\$1.96

SPECIAL 50% OFF

Gingham Prints, Percales, Voiles, Shirtings, Dress Prints, Crepes, etc.

Buy 10 yards, get 15 yards. Buy 20 yards, get 30 yards. Buy 30 yards, get 40 yards. Buy 40 yards, get 50 yards. Buy 50 yards, get 60 yards. Buy 60 yards, get 70 yards. Buy 70 yards, get 80 yards. Buy 80 yards, get 90 yards. Buy 90 yards, get 100 yards.

104 N. Wells St., Dept. 581, Chicago

GUN BARGAINS

SEND NO MONEY

NO. 32 \$4.95
NO. 38 \$5.95
NO. 44 \$6.95
NO. 45 \$7.95
NO. 46 \$8.95
NO. 47 \$9.95
NO. 48 \$10.95
NO. 49 \$11.95
NO. 50 \$12.95
NO. 51 \$13.95
NO. 52 \$14.95
NO. 53 \$15.95
NO. 54 \$16.95
NO. 55 \$17.95
NO. 56 \$18.95
NO. 57 \$19.95
NO. 58 \$20.95
NO. 59 \$21.95
NO. 60 \$22.95
NO. 61 \$23.95
NO. 62 \$24.95
NO. 63 \$25.95
NO. 64 \$26.95
NO. 65 \$27.95
NO. 66 \$28.95
NO. 67 \$29.95
NO. 68 \$30.95
NO. 69 \$31.95
NO. 70 \$32.95
NO. 71 \$33.95
NO. 72 \$34.95
NO. 73 \$35.95
NO. 74 \$36.95
NO. 75 \$37.95
NO. 76 \$38.95
NO. 77 \$39.95
NO. 78 \$40.95
NO. 79 \$41.95
NO. 80 \$42.95
NO. 81 \$43.95
NO. 82 \$44.95
NO. 83 \$45.95
NO. 84 \$46.95
NO. 85 \$47.95
NO. 86 \$48.95
NO. 87 \$49.95
NO. 88 \$50.95
NO. 89 \$51.95
NO. 90 \$52.95
NO. 91 \$53.95
NO. 92 \$54.95
NO. 93 \$55.95
NO. 94 \$56.95
NO. 95 \$57.95
NO. 96 \$58.95
NO. 97 \$59.95
NO. 98 \$60.95
NO. 99 \$61.95
NO. 100 \$62.95

When answering advertisements please mention this magazine

Ghosts of the Living

(Continued from page 61)

"He opened the door of my room while I was asleep, and I heard him call, 'Mother.' That awakened me. He didn't come into the room, but he spoke to me. He said: 'Mother, I can't stay. I have come to say good-by.' Then he left the room and the door closed behind him. I don't know where he is, but I ought to hear from him soon."

A letter arrived from Benjamin that afternoon. It said that he was leaving for Cleveland, and would forward his new address from that city. That night a telegram came from Cleveland, saying that Benjamin Gough had died. The cause of his death was attributed to heart failure. Mrs. Gough wired to her sister in Cleveland to keep the body until she arrived. But this time there was no doubt that Benjamin was really dead.

Yet Mrs. Gough firmly believed that the last visitation had occurred while her son was still in a trance, from which he did not recover.

THIS recurrence of trance condition seems very closely related to the *samahdi* of India, although the Hindus are the only ones who claim to assume it voluntarily. From the physical standpoint, the case of Benjamin Gough closely parallels that of the celebrated mind reader, Washington Irving Bishop. This man was subject to cataleptic attacks in which the signs of death were unmistakably evident, according to the testimony of Doctor J. Edwin Briggs.

In 1873, Doctor Briggs stated, Bishop had been pronounced dead by two New York physicians, Doctors Ford and Leech.

"We applied all the different tests," said Doctor Briggs. "I remained with Bishop for twelve hours, doing nothing for him, and at the end of that time he gave a convulsive shudder and in forty minutes he had recovered from the attack."

Bishop usually carried a letter upon his person, prohibiting the performance of any autopsy upon his body. On May 11th, 1889, Bishop fell unconscious after one of his feasts of mind reading, and was pronounced dead at noon the next day. The letter in his pocket was overlooked and an autopsy was performed which showed "nothing to indicate the cause of death." The mother of the mind reader claimed that her son had only been in a state of trance, and would have recovered in due time.

This celebrated case conclusively substantiates the similar experiences of Benjamin Gough. The latter's mother may have been the victim of hallucinations; but it is remarkable that these visitations should have occurred while Benjamin was apparently dead, but actually alive.

I recall another instance which occurred in Chattanooga, Tennessee, according to my informant. As far as I can determine, it must have taken place about the year 1890. It is a tragic story of ghosts of the living.

A young man was engaged to be married to a girl who lived in Chattanooga, and he had come there for the wedding. Two days before the intended event, his fiancée fell ill. For a week she lay at the point of death, while the doctors disagreed as to the cause of the malady. Then she apparently died, and the wedding was supplanted by a funeral.

The intended bridegroom, who was of a high-strung temperament, suffered greatly during the young woman's illness and was on the verge of a nervous breakdown when the girl finally died. During the funeral he was confined to his room, not knowing that his fiancée had passed away. The girl was buried in the family vault, and a doctor was retained to watch her lover. Everyone was strictly forbidden to inform him of the girl's death until his condition was less critical.

The night following the funeral, people in the house were awakened by loud cries from the room of the unfortunate bridegroom. They found him lying on the floor, almost unconscious, and it was some time before they revived him completely.

He said that he had seen his betrothed; that she had entered the room, and had held out her hands as though imploring him to help her; but that when he had approached her, she had disappeared. He had stumbled and fallen in trying to reach her, and he could not understand why she had gone. So insistent was he in his demands to see her that the doctor was forced to tell him that the girl he loved had died.

He received the news with unexpected calmness. He did not appear to believe what they told him, but he no longer insisted that he see the girl. He slept very quietly during the remainder of the night, and all the next day he lay in a state of lethargy. Early in the evening he opened his eyes, and said:

"She is not gone. I shall see her again."

He repeated these words at intervals, seeming to have no cognizance of what was going on about him. The doctor decided that his condition was very critical, and feared for his sanity. He therefore gave orders that no one should disturb the patient, but that the door of the room should be left ajar in case he should become suddenly violent during the night.

THE house remained in silence until early in the morning. Then the sleepers were again awakened by a single scream, different from the cries of the preceding night. They hurried to the room where the young man had been sleeping. There, by the candle-light, they beheld an incredible scene. The young man lay on the floor, just as on the preceding night; but by the door huddled the girl whom they had buried two days before!

Someone raised her body, and she moaned. Horrified, they realized that she was still alive. Their efforts to re-

vive her were partly successful, but the young man did not respond to any treatment.

By morning, the girl seemed on the road to recovery, but hope had been abandoned for her lover. He was, by every indication, dead. The doctor stated that his condition had been so critical that the actual appearance of the girl had been a shock he could not survive.

The girl recovered rather rapidly, and told of her experience in the tomb. She said she had awakened in darkness, and had been extremely frightened. She did not know she was in a coffin; she did not realize where she was; her only desire was to leave the place. The door of the vault had been fastened temporarily, and as it was to be made more secure later, so that in her frenzy to get out she had managed to force it open. After that, she could remember nothing—neither finding her way to the room of the young man, nor having seen him.

She expressed great anxiety about her lover, and was told that he had gone away after the funeral, but that he would be brought to see her when she was better. She accepted the explanation; and, on the following day, the young man who had died so tragically was buried just before nightfall, without his fiancée even suspecting he was dead.

BUT that night the nurse, stationed in the room next to the girl's, heard her calling. She went in to find out what had disturbed her charge.

The young woman was sitting up in bed. A lamp had been kept burning in the corner of the room, and in its dim light the girl seemed very calm.

"What is the matter?" asked the nurse.

"Harold was here," the girl replied, "but he went away. I want to see him. Tell him to come back."

"But he is not here," replied the nurse. "He went away, and no one has heard from him. He won't be back—for a long while."

"I saw him," insisted the girl. "He came into the room, and he looked very unhappy. I spoke to him, but he didn't stay. I suppose he knew that I was ill, and was afraid he would frighten me. Please send for him; I know he is here."

The nurse informed the girl's parents, and they called the doctor. They were all greatly concerned, but no one could explain the girl's strange delusion.

They told her she must wait until morning, and to go back to sleep. She obeyed, but her first words upon waking were an inquiry for Harold. The doctor decided that the best solution to the dilemma was the truth; and he quietly explained to the girl that her lover was dead.

"He can't be dead," she replied calmly. "You thought I was dead, but I'm alive. There has been a mistake. Harold is still alive. I saw him last night."

The positive tone of the girl's statement alarmed those who heard her.

Sir Arthur's most startling assertion on this occasion, however, was that he had seen and received a message from the late Field Marshal Haig. He stated that this communication was of such a personal nature that he could not repeat it publicly, but had passed it on to Haig's family. He expects, he said, to receive another message from Haig's phantom—one that will be of such a nature that he can give it wide publicity.

The Dog that Convicted a Murderer

LAWYERS are of necessity a notoriously incredulous class of men, so when one of them tells a story like the following, his word has particular significance. The narrator of this tale was one of the most brilliant cross-examiners that the English bar has known, Sergeant William Ballantine (1812-1887).

This is his account:

"I do not think it will be out of place here, to relate a story often told by Sir Astley Cooper. I am not certain that it has not already been in print, but I know that I have had frequent conversations about it with his nephew.

"There had been a murder, and Sir Astley was upon the scene when a man suspected of the crime was apprehended. Sir Astley, being greatly interested, accompanied the officers with their prisoner to the jail, where he and they and the accused were all in a cell, locked in together. Of a sudden they noticed a little dog which kept biting the skirt of the prisoner's coat. This led them to examine the garment, and they found upon it traces of blood which ultimately led to the conviction of the man. When they looked around, the dog had disappeared, although the door had never been opened. How it had got there, or how it had got away, nobody could tell.

"Whenever Bransby Cooper spoke of this, he always said that of course his uncle had made a mistake, and that he was convinced of this himself; and Bransby used to add that, no doubt, if the matter had been investigated, it would have been shown that there was a way of accounting for it through

natural causes. But I believe that neither Sir Astley nor his nephew, in their hearts, discarded entirely the evidence of the supernatural."

Sir Astley Paston Cooper was perhaps one of the most famous and influential surgeons of his time in England, and apparently not only he, but the officers with him in the cell, saw the dog. They saw it—and then they didn't see it. Where did it come from?

What Did the Woman Want?

GENERAL SIR A. BECHER, who held a high appointment on the British Staff in India, went, accompanied by his son, to the Hill Station of Kussowlie, about March, 1867, to look at a bungalow he had secured for his family to reside in during the approaching hot season. The inspection took longer than they had anticipated, so the father and son decided to remain in the house until morning, and to return then.

During the night the General awoke suddenly and saw the figure of a native woman standing near his bed, and close to an open door which led into the bathroom. He called out:

"Who are you?" and jumped out of bed, just as the figure retreated into the bathroom. The General followed it, but on reaching the outer door found that it was locked and that the figure had disappeared.

He went to bed again, and in the morning he wrote in pencil on a door-post, "Saw a ghost," but he did not mention the circumstance to his wife on his return.

A few days after, the General and his family took possession of the house for the season, and Lady Becher chose the room the General had slept in for her dressing-room. About seven o'clock, on the first evening of their arrival, Lady Becher was dressing for dinner, when, on going to her wardrobe she saw, standing within the bathroom near-by, a native woman. Lady Becher, thinking for the moment that it was her own *ayah*, asked her what she wanted.

The figure immediately disappeared by the same door as on the former occasion, which, as before, was found locked!

Lady Becher was not much alarmed,

but felt that something unusual had occurred, and at dinner mentioned the event to the General and his son.

That same night their youngest son, a boy about eight years of age, was sleeping in the same room with his parents, his bed facing an open door which led into his mother's dressing-room. In the middle of the night the boy started up in his bed in a frightened attitude and called out:

"What do you want, *ayah*? What do you want?" in Hindustani, as if he were seeing a native woman servant in the dressing-room. His mother quieted him and he fell asleep. On that occasion the figure was not seen by the parents, nor was it ever again seen, though the family lived for months in the house. But this last incident confirmed their feeling that the same woman had appeared to all three, and on inquiring of previous occupants they learned that this apparition was frequently to be seen by new tenants on their first night or so in the house. The story was this:

A native Hill, or Cashmere woman, very fair and handsome, had been murdered some years before in a hut a few yards below the bungalow, and directly in line with the outer door leading into the bath and dressing-room, through which, on all three occasions, the figure had entered and disappeared.

Subsequently, Sir Arthur Becher writes:

Winchester, May 14, 1884.

I write to say Lady Becher does not desire to state anything more personally on the subject of the "Ghost Story" I before detailed, as she says my account of it was given . . . entirely in accordance with her recollections of the circumstances. The woman appeared to me in the night, and in the ordinary light of a room without any blinds or shutters.

In answer to inquiries, the General explained further that the bathroom door was locked on the inside; that the rooms were all on the ground floor, there being no exit but by the doors referred to; and that his young son positively had not heard of the ghost before he saw it.

The Bewitched Coffee Pot

(Continued from page 37)

Miss O'Connell and Miss Hoban returned to get at the bottom of what they believed to be a gigantic hoax. In broad daylight, the two women heard the noise of grating brass and iron. Into the bedroom they rushed; to find the metal bedstead smashed to bits, and the sheets scattered and ripped as if by human hands. And yet not human hands, either: for no man could have torn that iron framework to pieces and left it a battered mass of scrap iron.

In the evening, a visiting pastor—and a highly skeptical one—arrived to

spend the night at the rectory. For purposes of mutual observation, the minister and Father Donohue agreed to sleep in a white iron double bed on the second floor.

Despite their intention to watch, both men fell asleep—but not for long. At one o'clock, or shortly after, they were tossed out of bed, thrown heavily to the floor, with blankets and mattress on top of them. And, to cap the climax, blankets, mattress and clergymen were literally drowned in a sudden flood of ice cold water!

Beneath the mass of bedcoverings, the pair gasped for breath while their ears were deafened by a most fiendish racket—the tearing of iron, the wrenching of steel, the explosive sound of rivets being torn from their places. The men struggled out at last, and there, before them, was the bed—wrecked—wrenched out of shape, the spring torn, crumpled and broken. A madman, a superman—a giant even, could not have done this damage.

Moreover, no madman or giant had. The two friends were not asleep when

some Thing had hurled them from their bed and then battered it to bits.

They had been awakened by a series of sharp clicks—the inevitable prelude to the appearance of these unearthly manifestations. They had looked, as awakened men will, up and at the foot of the bed.

The room was in utter darkness save for the sheen of moonlight. But that was enough to reveal a face hanging in thin air, horrible, grotesque—a face that grimaced—that was twisted and scarred almost out of human semblance. Not the face of a demon—but that of a dead man. And all around it a shock of wild white hair floated like a shroud. The eyes were too much for the staring pair to describe. They flamed, they blazed, they were unearthly—erotic—terrible. They saw the face for a fraction of a second only—and then came the deluge.

It was the Thing Father Donohue had seen before—the Thing that had terrified him, and to which he had refused to give credence—the ghost that haunted the Hanover rectory.

The next day, the visiting pastor departed in haste, and the wreck of the bed was cast into the yard. Like lightning, the rumor of what had happened ran through the town. Telephones rang, local news correspondents besieged the Boston papers, cameramen caught up their tripods. Into Hanover they flocked, all set for the greatest ghost hunt of modern times in New England.

BEFORE going further into what they found—or did not find—it might be well to analyze this extraordinary series of manifestations.

Father Donohue was a man of great intelligence and discernment. He was a tall, rather athletic type, and conspicuous for an amazing gift of oratory. Word and deed had made him admired all over Massachusetts, while the people in Hanover liked and revered him.

But even supposing, for the sake of argument, that someone had borne him ill-will. It would have been impossible for any man or woman to have staged the weird phenomena which actually occurred—not only in the presence of Father Donohue, but in that of Miss O'Connell, and twelve incredulous New Englanders.

Had any of them been a bit more learned in supernatural lore, they might have recognized the manifestations as those of a mischievous spirit known in England and Germany as a *poltergeist*; a ghost that does much damage, yet at the same time is rather more whimsical than diabolical in its destruction.

Poltergeists herald no doom. In fact, there are records in England, Ireland and France, of families living side by side, so to speak, with these eerie and inexplicable creatures, and of being rather annoyed but not otherwise harmed. It is interesting to note that in France, in 1912, there was a manifestation of this sort, and that when the police were called in, they were

very roughly handled by the unseen Thing.

There were no State Police in Massachusetts at this time, however, and the local authorities were too terrified by now to do anything. So it was left to the newspapermen and a few bolder townsfolk to carry on the great ghost hunt that ended as startlingly, as amazingly and as inexplicably as it had begun.

THE first day, the coffee pot had ceased its actions in the kitchen, but when set on the dining-room table, it tipped and tilted, and rose in mid-air to spill its contents, though no human hand touched it. At almost the same time a neighbor, who happened to be in the house, saw a hatrack move on the upper floor—though no one was near it, or even in that part of the house—saw it slide or glide in mid-air a distance of six feet, and then come hurtling down the stairs. It nearly hit her as she fled.

On came the army of newspapermen, ready to explode the theory of specter and manifestations, ready to write the "inside story" of the ghost for their journals. But they never did.

Father Donohue received them gratefully. The specter and its pranks had rather gotten on his nerves, though he was a brave man and not easily daunted.

He proposed a new and final test. The newspapermen and cameramen would gather at his house as dusk fell. With them were to come men and women of the town—all the bolder spirits, in fact. They would pass the evening in jovial talk, and if anything happened they would all be on hand to see it.

The cameramen went to observe the antics of the celebrated coffee pot, but unfortunately for the pictorial columns of their papers, the coffee pot sat sedately on the stove and refused to budge of its own accord. All there was to see was the ruined bed, the smashed table, the remains of the second hatrack.

Naturally the newspapermen were somewhat impressed by all the damage, but were inclined to be more skeptical than ever.

Dusk fell over Hanover. One by one, the village congregated in the parlor of the little parsonage. They were all in high spirits. Some of the newspapermen started spinning yarns for the amusement of the company, and presently coffee and cakes were served. It was more like an ordinary party than a ghost hunt, and this was exactly what Father Donohue and the housekeeper had planned.

They wanted their guests to be in an ordinary and cheerful frame of mind, and in no mood for "seeing things." Some of the wiser ones, of course, kept an ear cocked for possible unearthly happenings. But there were none, and the evening wore on very naturally, even gayly, in the bright glare of electric lights.

At a minute to one, the gaiety was

You Can Reduce In Just Two Ways

Fat enters the body when food is consumed in excess of what's needed. It can be removed by lessening the fat-making food intake or by muscular exercises. There is no other way for it to get in or out of the body. Therefore to lose fat, eat less food that makes fat, or take more exercise that consumes fat—or do both.

But even if all remember there is no question as to whether the treatment will work or not. All other ills of the body may sometimes fail to respond even when the best known methods are applied. Not so with obesity. The cause and elimination is a matter of mathematics and there is no argument about it. If you draw out more from your bank account than you put into it the amount will be reduced—and in like manner so will you.

"How to Reduce Weight," by Bernard Macfadden, gives you the complete regime for weight reduction, including full dietary instructions, actual menus, food classifications and reduction exercises. It is all simply told and is as simple to carry out.

By diet and exercise he does not mean starving and working yourself into early death. It is simply a reasonable readjustment of your life along pleasant, natural lines that you will thoroughly enjoy and which will improve your general health.

It is by all odds the most thorough and effective work on weight reduction that we have ever seen.

SEND ONLY 50c FOR THIS BOOK

Upon receipt of your remittance of fifty cents, we will immediately send you a copy of this helpful book with the understanding that if you are not thoroughly satisfied with it we will promptly refund your money.

Macfadden Publications, Inc.
Desk G. S.-7, 1926 Broadway, New York

ALL PRICES 36 CENTS

TEXAS 36 CENTS
SHARPS 36 CENTS
BLANK AUTOMATIC 36 CENTS

NO MONEY
JENKINS, 683 Broadway, New York, Dept. 7-4-113

289 22 CAL. REPEATER

BLANK AUTOMATIC

WITH BOX OF CARTRIDGES FREE

No money
JENKINS, 683 Broadway, New York, Dept. 7-4-113

Fortune Tellers' Globes for CRYSTAL GAZING

Crystals and crystal balls as used by professional fortune tellers. Includes complete instructions for use. Price 36 cents.

SPECIAL OFFER Reply to ad, including 36 cents. The above globe, for 36 cents, or 36 cents more for 36 cents.

MAGNUS WORKS

Box 12, York St., New York, Dept. H.F.N.

BIGGEST BARGAIN SALE

New England's Largest Watch Store

Direct from Switzerland

ANY PHOTO ENLARGED

Size 10x12 inches

Price, 98c

SEND NO MONEY

Special offer

2852 Ogden Ave., Dept. H-303 CHICAGO, ILL.



Grocery Bills all Paid—and \$10 a Day Besides

If you want plenty of money to pay all your grocery bills—and \$8 to \$10 in a day besides—just send me your name and I'll show you a new, pleasant, interesting way to get it. I'll give you the same chance I gave to L. C. Van Allen, of Illinois, who reports that he averages more than \$100 profit a week. You don't need any experience. Gustav Karnath, a farm laborer in Minnesota, says, "Made \$20.35 the first 5 hours." Mrs. B. L. Hodges, of New York, writes, "Earning more money than before. Never fail to make a profit of \$18 to \$20 a day." And right now I am offering you the same opportunity I gave these people.

Big Profits for Easy Work

I am President of a million-dollar Company. I distribute high-quality Groceries and other Household Necessities direct from factory to user through Authorized Local Representatives. Last year my Representatives made nearly a million dollars. Now I invite you to share in these profits. I'll give you an exclusive territory. I'll help you make big money from the very start.

No Capital or Experience Needed

You don't need capital, training or experience. All you have to do is call on my friends and my established customers in your locality and take care of their orders. It is easy. Victor Baumann, of Florida, says, "Made \$83 clear profit first 5 days." Mrs. K. R. Roof, of S. C., says, "Made over \$40 the first week I started." Get into this interesting, big-pay work yourself. YOU DON'T RISK A CENT. Keep your present job and start with me in spare time if you want to. Oscar Stuart, of W. Va., reports \$18 profit in 2 1/2 hours.

FREE!

**NEW FORD
TUDOR SEDAN**

NOT a contest. I offer you a new car as a mere reward—no prize—**in addition to your regular profits.** Write for particulars.



Send No Money

Just send me your name—nothing else. Grasp this wonderful money-making opportunity right now. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose. I'll send you my money-making plan that offers plenty of money to pay all of your grocery bills and \$8 to \$10 in a single day besides. I will give you this opportunity if you've been waiting for it. Send coupon TODAY SURE!

Mail This NOW

Albert Mills, Pres., American Products Co.,
1370 Monmouth Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio

Tell me, without cost or obligation, about your wonderful new proposition that offers money to pay all my grocery bills and \$8 to \$10 in a day besides. Also explain how new Ford Offer.

Name.....

Address.....

© A. P. Co. (Print or Write Plainly)

at its highest. But as the clock chimed one, the talk stopped as if suddenly cut by a knife. Cups and saucers were set abruptly on the table. The newspapermen felt the hair rise on their heads. They looked at their neighbors, and beheld faces that were ghastly white.

Yet nothing had happened, nothing had been heard. Why did the talk stop? No one knows. Why did stark, nameless terror creep over them as the clock tolled?

In the midst of this deathly, uncanny silence came a series of four sharp clicks. The once gay company sat riveted to their chairs, speechless with sudden fright. That was the dreaded signal!

Again a noise—louder and louder. Great, crunching, heavy steps. Not the steps of a human man or woman. Not even the steps of a giant. They were terrific—devastating. The house shook to its foundations.

From a far room on the top floor they came—nearer and nearer. Down the hall—over the carpet—onto the bare floor—nearer and nearer the head of the stairs.

No fictional ghost story has ever presented a weirder picture. The oncoming steps, the company huddled in the parlor, shaking, quivering, speechless with fear and dread. And still the steps came on. Even the electric lights shook and shivered in their sockets, so great—so superhuman—was the impact on ceiling and walls.

They came, these terrible steps, to the top of the stairs. They paused for the time it takes to draw a swift breath—then they started to descend. Down they came—down!

Earlier in the evening, five bold brave men had declared that they would rush to any part of the house from which a sound was heard, that they'd attack ghost or man with sticks and cudgels—and beat the man or ghost into submission. But that was earlier—

Now, no man moved. No man save one—a trembling newspaper reporter. Out to the bottom of the stairs he dashed, looked for a moment into utter darkness, heard the steps bearing down on him, upon him, flung out his hands in a last desperate clutch—and was hurled violently backward, thrown over in a torrent of icy water that swept down upon him from nowhere!

The steps stopped. It was all over. The man was wet and shaking; the floor was wet; the stairs were wet. Yet there had been no water in the house.

The neighbors and newspapermen flung open the door and ran, the former to their homes, the latter to the nearest telephone, where they sent the word whirling over the wires to their respective city desks.

The ghost hunt was over.

Needless to say, the invited guests had examined the house from top to bottom before the occurrence. They had looked doors and windows. No one could have entered. No one could have left.

WHO, then, or what, caused the thundering steps and the avalanche of water in a house where there was no water?

There is a rumored explanation. Older folk in the town remember a former tenant of the house, Francis Marshall Monroe, a man with a face seamed and lined, a man who always wore a bristling bush of white hair—and a man who was a scoffer and a skeptic. In life, however, he had been a mild and good natured man—and he had been dead many years.

Did he return to haunt the Hanover paragon?

No one knows and no one can ever tell. The mystery is as inexplicable as ever. Nowadays an ordinary New England family lives in the little white house. They hear nothing; they see nothing. The haunting has ended as mysteriously as it began.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, OF GHOST STORIES, published monthly at Dundelin.

New Jersey, for April 1, 1929.
State of New York } ss.
County of New York }

Before me, a Notary Public, in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared George Bond, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the editor of the GHOST STORIES, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Macfadden Publications Corporation, 1926 Broadway, New York City; Editor, George Bond, 320 West 108th St., New York City; Managing Editor, Camille Macfadden, 621 West 188th St., New York City; Business Managers, none.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.) Owner, Gustav Baumann, 1926 Broadway, New York City. Stockholders in Macfadden Publications, Inc., 1926 Broadway, New York City. Stockholders in Macfadden Publications, Inc., 1926 Broadway, New York City. Stockholders in Macfadden Publications, Inc., 1926 Broadway, New York City. Stockholders in Macfadden Publications, Inc., 1926 Broadway, New York City.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None. 4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting. It is averred also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said bonds, mortgages, or other securities than as so stated by him.

5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the six months preceding the date shown above is _____.

(This information is required from daily publications only.)
(Signed) GEORGE BOND, Editor.
Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of March, 1929.
(SEAL) WESLEY E. PAPE.
(My commission expires March 30, 1929.)

JOHNSON SMITH & CO. 890 Racine, Wis.

Unusual Offering Smart, Modern Jewelry Saving Prices - Guaranteed Quality

Latest Styles from Paris —

Direct Diamond Importations from Antwerp —

Standard watches from the world's best makers, and saving prices which are beyond comparison. Manufacturing on a large scale and volume buying for both our national mail order business, and our chain store system enable us to offer these extraordinary values. All of this with no extra charge for the convenience of liberal deferred credit, that is — the policy of "Royal".

Just Say: "Charge It!" — 12 Months to Pay

If you have dealt with us before, just make your selection — send \$1.00 with your order and say: "Charge It!" — that's all — and your choice will come to you immediately, postage prepaid, no C.O.D. to pay on arrival.

New buyers send \$1.00 with order and a few lines, telling us a little about yourself, for example: (A) — How long at present address. (B) — Age. (C) — Married or Single. (D) — Name of employer. (E) — What work at. (F) — How long at that work.

This information will be held strictly confidential — we make no direct inquiries of anyone — not even from your employer.

10 Days Free Trial — Satisfaction Guaranteed

You have the full privilege of 10 days' free trial — if not entirely satisfied return shipment at our expense and the entire deposit will be refunded. Return guarantee bond with every purchase.

All Dealings Strictly Confidential

A full year to pay! No extra charge — no red tape. You take no risk — satisfaction absolutely guaranteed or money back.

Gift Cases Free. Every article comes to you in a beautiful and appropriate presentation case.

**Your Choice
SENT FOR \$1.00
12 MONTHS TO PAY
on Everything**

DB1-Butterfly design 18K SOLID WHITE GOLD engagement ring. Flawless quality, genuine blue-white diamond. \$1 with order, \$4.08 a month.

It's a BULOVA



\$3750

DB3-The "CAMELIA" band—specially engraved new oval design lady's BULOVA wrist watch. Guaranteed 15 jewel movement; placed flexible bracelet. Patented "dust-tite" protector. Warranted accurate \$1 with order, \$3.04 a mo.

\$25

DB4—Hand engraved and pierced 18K Solid White Gold lady's ring. All genuine blue-white diamond. \$1 with order, \$2 a month.

It's a BULOVA

\$2975

DB5-Nationally advertised 15 jewel BULOVA gentleman's watch. White gold filled case, "dust-tite" protector keeps out dust and dirt, radium dial and hands furnished with latest style woven mesh wristband to match. \$1 with order, \$2.39 a month.

DB6

18K \$2500
Gentleman's initial of emblem ring. 18K SOLID WHITE GOLD, set with genuine black onyx and flashing blue-white diamond. Any initial or emblem in raised white gold. \$1 with order, \$2 a month.

\$5000

DB7-A massive, 14K Solid Green Gold gentleman's ring. 18K Solid White Gold top; genuine blue-white diamond. \$1 with order, \$4.08 a mo.

DB10-The "MODERNIST", richly hand engraved, fabulous step mounting. 18K SOLID WHITE GOLD square prong effect. Brilliant, superior quality, genuine blue-white diamond. \$1 with order, \$3.66 a month. \$4500

\$3750

DB11-ELGIN "MOLENEUX" Modernistic design created in Paris. Tricolor dial, guaranteed dependable ELGIN movement, case furnished in black or jade green enamel, newest style silk cord wrist band. \$1 with order, \$3.04 a month.

\$4850

DB12-Dazzling cluster of 7 perfectly matched genuine blue-white diamonds, 18K Solid White Gold mounting. Looks like a \$7500 solitaire. \$3.96 a month.

\$134

DB14 1975
Lady's birthstone ring of 7 perfectly matched genuine blue-white diamonds, set with topaz, amethyst, emerald, ruby or sapphire. \$1 with order, \$1.56 a month.

Credit at Cash Prices

ELGIN SPORT-KING

\$2950

DB18-The "SPORT KING" Handsomely engraved new sport model. White or green gold filled case, warranted 20 years, tested with guaranteed, accurate, timed movement. ELGIN or WALTHAM movement. Gold filled 15 jewel wrist band. \$1 with order, \$2.37 a month.

Send for Latest CATALOG FREE To Adults

FREE—Completely illustrated catalogue of fine diamonds, Bulova, Elgin, Waltham, Hamilton, Howard, Illinois watches, time jewelry and silverware at special prices. Write now to get your FREE copy.

Established 1895

ROYAL DIAMOND & WATCH CO.

ADDRESS DEPT. 21-U 170 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N.Y.